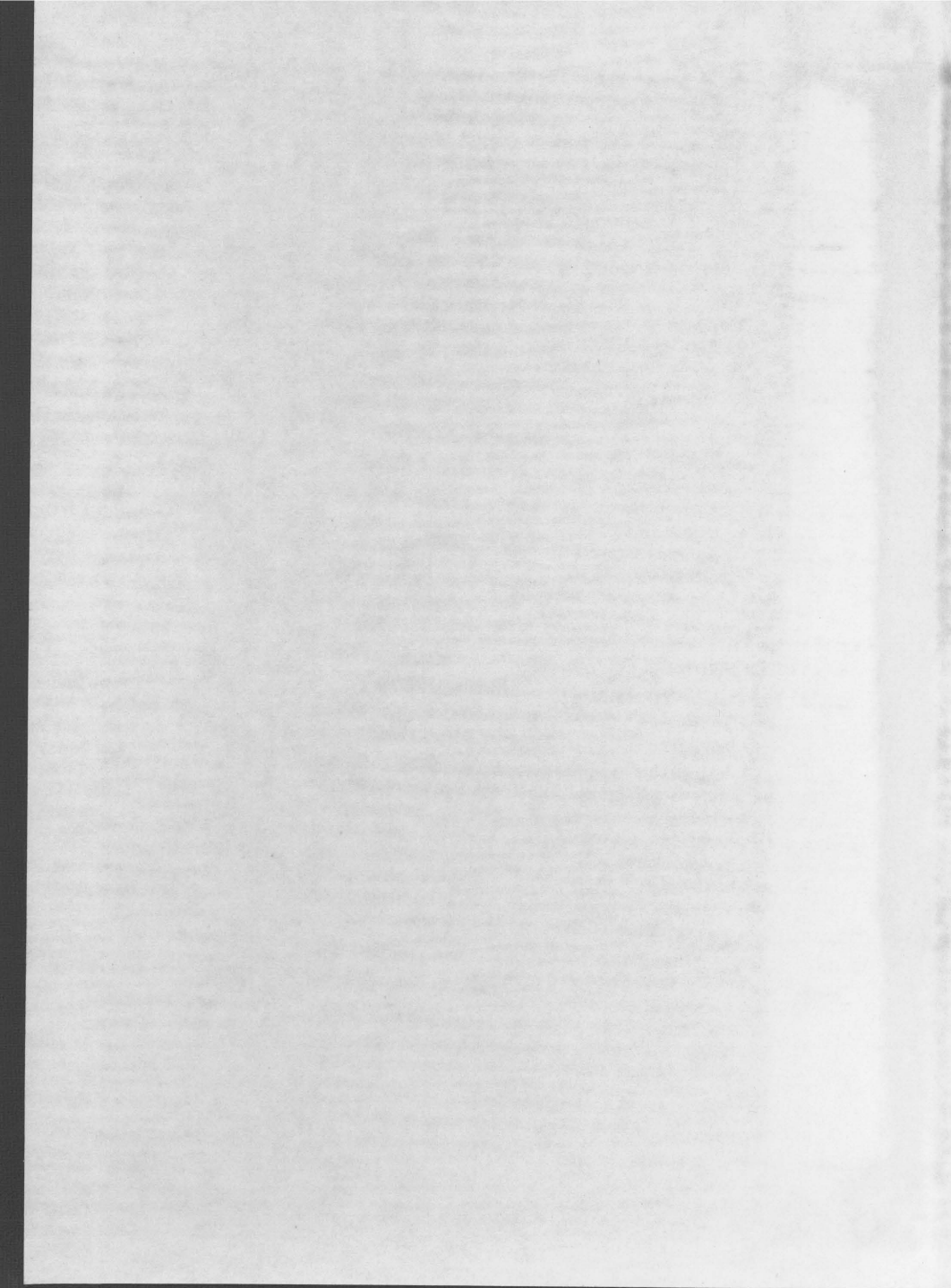


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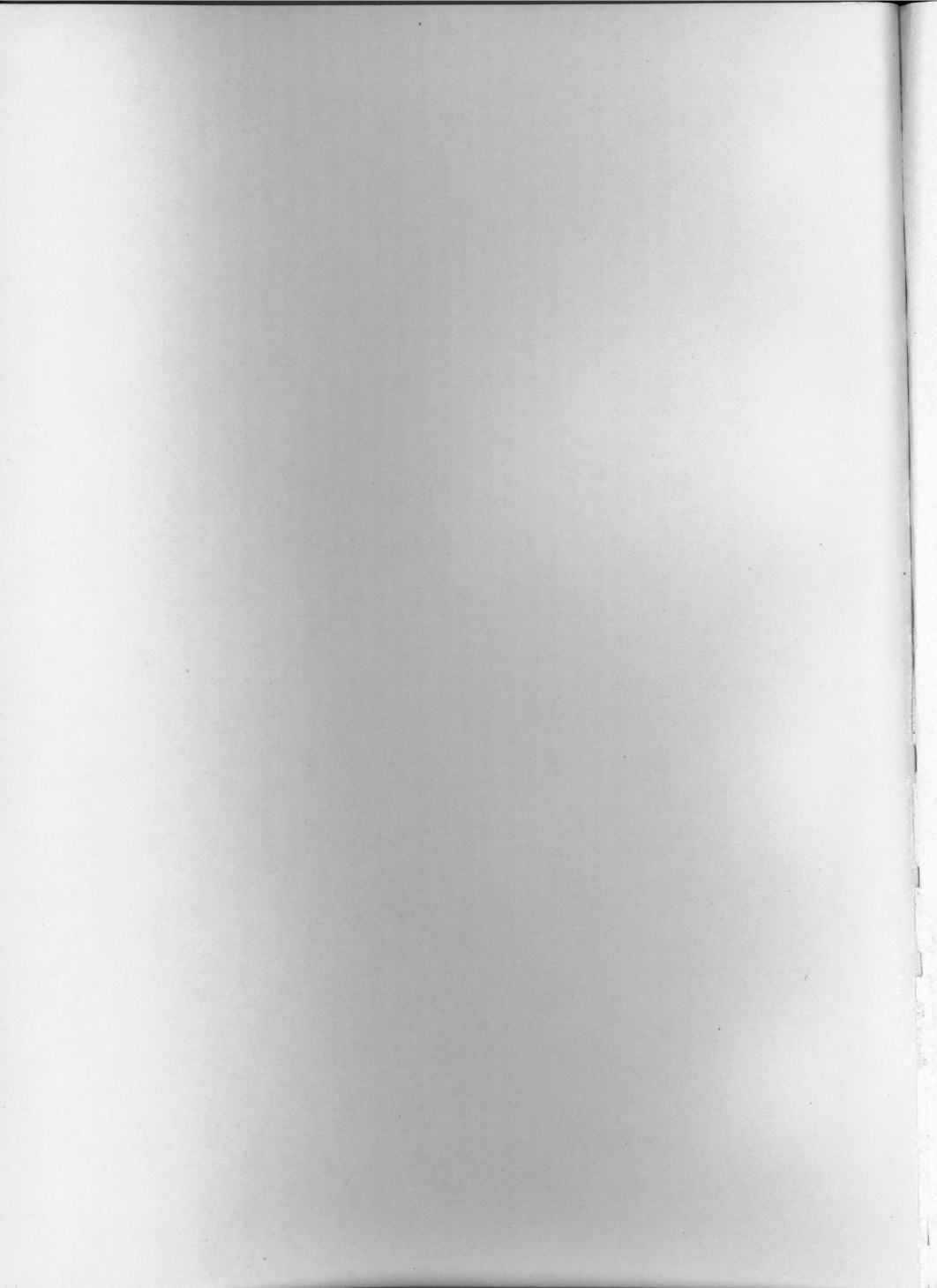
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JANE D. SHACKELFORD

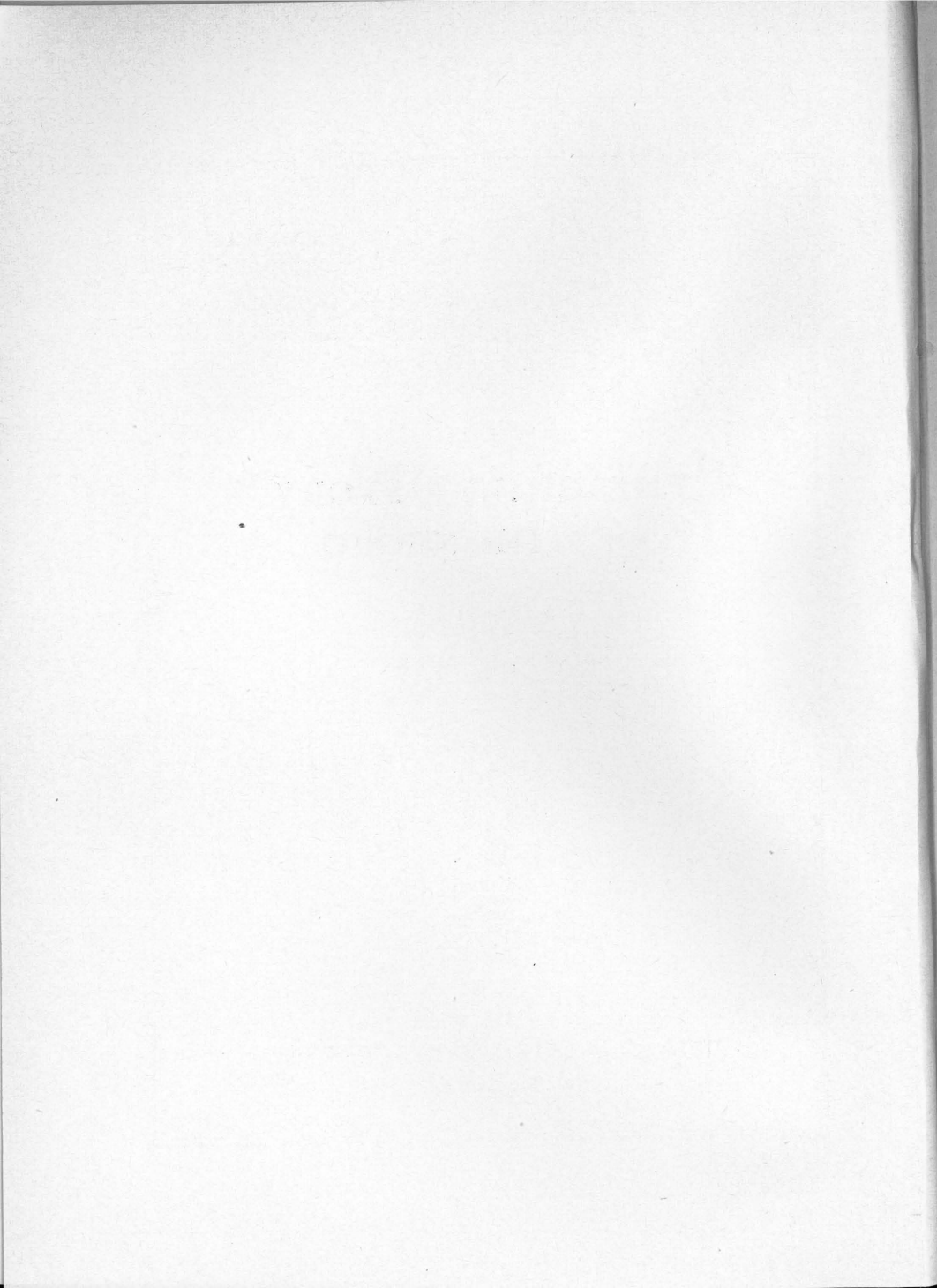




THE HISTORY  
OF THE NEGRO



THE CHILD'S STORY  
OF THE NEGRO



# *The* CHILD'S STORY *of the* NEGRO

*By*

JANE DABNEY SHACKELFORD

*Primary Teacher, Booker Washington School  
Terre Haute, Indiana*

AUTHOR OF

*My Happy Days*

*Original Illustrations by*

LOIS MAILOU JONES



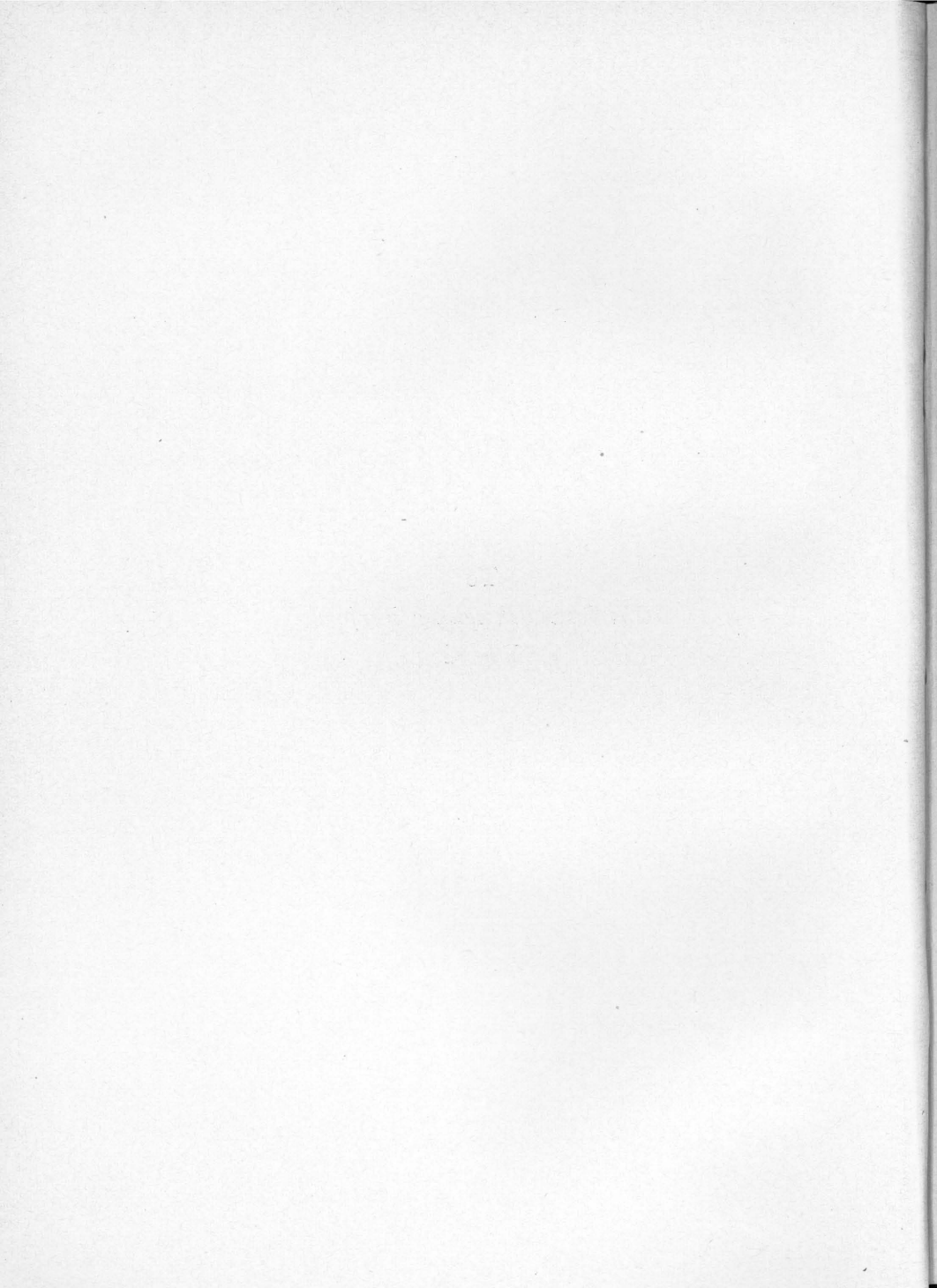
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To  
*Charlotte Schweitzer Burford*  
Friend





## INTRODUCTION

When I wrote in 1938 the first edition of *The Child's Story of the Negro*, I addressed it to Negro children. I wanted to place in their hands an easy, interesting book that would help them appreciate the traditions, aspirations, and achievements of the Negro. Through the brief biographical sketches I had hoped to stimulate them to higher endeavor, showing them that what was possible for these great men and women was also possible for them.

When I received so many excellent reviews urging all children to read the book, I realized I had made a mistake in writing it for one small group.

In this revised edition, I have corrected that mistake. The book is addressed to all teachers and children in the elementary schools.

All the material is motivated. Each selection or group of selections is preceded by thought provoking questions or other introductory material to stimulate the pupil's interest and understanding.

Each chapter is followed by stimulating topics for discussion, or seat work which the children will enjoy doing.

It is my hope that the revised edition of *The Child's Story of the Negro* will be read with an open mind and a friendly spirit and that it will help to bring about a better understanding.

## INTRODUCTION

Certain materials are reprinted in this volume through the courtesy of and arrangement with the original publishers. These are "The Seedling" from Dunbar's *Poems* published by Dodd, Mead and Company, and the photographs from *African Sculpture Speaks* by Ladislav Segy.

JANE DABNEY SHACKELFORD

*Terre Haute, Indiana*

*August, 1955*

## VALUABLE AIDS IN TEACHING NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY

*We Build Together* by Charlemae Rollins

The National Council of Teachers of English  
211 West Sixty-Eighth Street, Chicago, Ill.

This is an excellent reader's guide to Negro life and literature for elementary and high school use. Listed also are valuable sources of audio-visual aids; slides, motion pictures, radioscripts, exhibits, etc.

The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History  
1538 Ninth St., N. W.

Washington 1, D. C.

Books, pictures, and Negro History Week Kits may be obtained from this organization.

Folkways Records & Service Corp.

117 West 46th St.

New York City

Recordings of African Negro and American Negro music and folk tales may be obtained from this corporation.

The Library of Congress

Division of Music

Washington, D. C.

Recordings of Negro folk music may be purchased or rented from this library.

1910

1911

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is due many persons for their assistance in the revision of this book.

For critical evaluation of the first edition, and for outlining the format and pattern of revising it, I wish to express sincere appreciation to Dr. William M. Brewer, Supervising Director of the Department of History of the High Schools of the District of Columbia, and Dr. Charles H. Wesley, President of Central State College, Wilberforce, Ohio.

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To Miss Blanche Fuqua, former Director of Elementary Education, Terre Haute, Indiana, I express my deepest gratitude for valuable assistance in editing the manuscript and for her inspiration and encouragement throughout the years.

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Africa

## CHAPTER I

### AFRICA

Far, far across the ocean, miles and miles from our country is a wonderful continent called Africa. It is many times larger than the United States, where we live, and is one of the most interesting lands in the world.

Much of it is covered with a great desert, or hot, dry, sandy land. Some of it is covered with high mountains with snowy peaks. Many rivers, hundreds of miles long, tumble down these mountains and flow into the sea. Some of the rivers flow into beautiful, clear, blue lakes.

In some parts of Africa are deep, dark, dense forests called jungles. In these forests live many of the strange animals which you enjoy seeing at the circus and the parks. Would you like to read some stories about this wonderful land and its people?

### THE CLIMATE OF AFRICA

Let us imagine we are making a visit to the middle of Africa, far back from the coast. How hot it is! The sun shines so bright that we have to put on our sun glasses to keep it from hurting our eyes. It is so hot that we have to

change our clothing. After we put on our thinnest clothes we are not comfortable.

"We must be visiting this country in the summer time." we say to ourselves. But we are told that in this part of Africa there is no summer as we know it. There are no four seasons as we have. Here they have only two seasons, a wet season and a dry season.

During the wet season it rains almost every day and night. During the dry season there is little or no rain.

It is always hot here during the day. Only the mornings and evenings are sometimes cool.

Would you like to live in this part of Africa? Why?

### PLANTS AND ANIMALS

How green the grass is! And how tall! In the field it is often twice as high as our heads. The Africans call it elephant grass.

There are wild flowers everywhere. What bright colors they are! And how fragrant! They make a beautiful carpet under our feet.

Everywhere we see palm trees with their large fern-like leaves. Here also grows the strange baobab or monkey-bread tree, and the tree that gives us our rubber.

On the plains of Africa we find large plantations of cotton, sugar cane, tobacco, coffee, bananas, olives, oranges, and coconuts.

In the forests the trees are very tall. So many vines grow



from one branch to the other that they shut out the sun. That is why the jungle is so dark. Here we find all kinds of monkeys chattering in the tree tops. They are very mischievous little fellows. They chase each other through the trees and throw down coconuts on the passers-by.

What bright-colored birds we see! And how sweetly some of them sing! We are surprised to find doves, larks, and hawks just like our birds at home. But we are more interested in the beautiful red and green parrots, the tiny pink bee-eaters, and the little sun-birds.

Did you know that the largest bird in the world lives in Africa? It is the ostrich. When it is full-grown, it is taller than the tallest man. It is very different from many birds. It cannot fly at all because its wings are too small; but it can run faster than a horse. Ostriches are very valuable birds because of their beautiful plumes.

Let us travel on into the darkest part of the jungle. Here we find the fiercest animals, such as the lion, leopard, panther, and hyena. Sometimes they leave the forest and wander down to the villages in search of food. The natives must be very cautious to protect themselves from these beasts.

In some parts of the woods are herds of elephants. These are the giants of the animal world. They do not stay in the jungle all the time, but wander out on the plains. Here we find many other animals that like the tall grass.

Herds of zebras are feeding in the distance. What queer



animals they are! They look as if some one painted those gay black stripes on their coats.

Now and then we see a giraffe, the tallest animal in the world. Did you know that this animal cannot make a sound?

Some of the strange animals of Africa like to be near the swamps and streams. There we find huge crocodiles, hippopotamuses, and rhinoceroses.

Many people think that the rhinoceros is the ugliest animal on earth? Do you? The African rhinoceros is different from those that live in other countries because he has two horns on his big ugly nose. He uses these to fight his enemies and to dig up shrubs and roots which he uses for food.

The eyes of the rhinoceros are very small and he cannot see very well. There is a small bird called a horn-bill that tells him when danger is near. This bird sits on his back and eats the flies that annoy him. If an enemy comes in sight, the horn-bill gives a loud cry and flies away. Then the rhinoceros crashes through the jungle.

## INSECT LIFE

This strange country is a paradise for insects. As we travel along, the ground and the air seem alive with them. We think we have never seen so many spiders and centipedes.

What beautiful butterflies! Their bright-colored wings glisten as they flit from flower to flower.

At night we see thousands of lightning bugs. They are

much larger than our fireflies and carry their lights on their heads.

Perhaps the most interesting insects in Africa are the ants. Some of them are just like the ants in our country and have the same habits. Others are quite different. No African insect is feared quite so much as the driver ants. They are flesh-eating creatures and they travel in large armies eating every animal in their path. They have been known to kill and eat the powerful elephant and the lion. There is only one way the animals can escape them and that is to rush into the lakes and streams. The ants cannot cross the water.

#### THINGS TO DO

Find all the pictures of African animals that you can and bring them to school.

Draw these animals and make a neat booklet of your drawings.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

Number the lines on your paper from 1 to 15.

After each number write the name of the animal that answers the question.

1. Which animal cannot make a sound?
2. What is the largest bird in the world?
3. Which animal chatters in the tree tops?
4. Which animal is the giant of the animal world?
5. Which animal is the "King of Beasts"?
6. Which animal has two horns on his nose?
7. Which animal has gay black stripes on his coat?
8. Which animal has beautiful plumes?

9. Which animal is the tallest animal in the world?
10. Which animal has long tusks?
11. Which animal is the ugliest animal in the world?
12. Which animal stays on the back of the rhinoceros?
13. Which animal lives in the water?
14. Which animal travels in armies?
15. Which animal has a lamp on his head?

lightning bug

giraffe

crocodile

centipede

hawk

ant

elephant

ostrich

lion

parrot

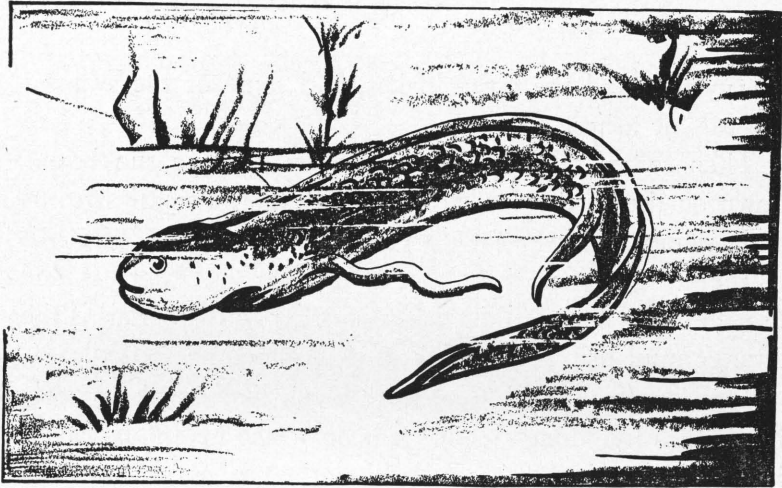
horn-bill

rhinoceros

zebra

monkey

sun-bird



Mud Fish

### A QUEER AFRICAN FISH

Did you ever see a fish that could live out of water? This might seem a strange question to ask you; but the little African boys and girls who live near the small rivers, or swamps have seen many of them.

You remember that in many parts of Africa there are only two seasons during the year, a wet season and a dry season. There is no summer, winter, autumn, or spring as we know them. During the wet season it rains and rains and rains. The water streams from the sky as if it were poured from a giant pitcher. The lightning flashes and the thunder rumbles. The water fills the lakes, overflows the rivers, and covers the swamps. There is plenty of water

everywhere and the rivers, lakes, and some of the swamps are full of fishes.

Then comes the dry season. Every day the sun beams down on the earth. It dries up many of the small streams and swamps. Now what do you think becomes of the fish in them? Some of them die, of course; but there is one fish that does not need the water in order to live. This is the strange mud-fish or lung-fish as it is sometimes called.

He is a queer looking creature much like a snake or eel; but he has four long slender legs on which he ambles about in the soft mud. He has gills like other fishes and breathes with these under the water. He also has lungs which he uses when the streams or swamps dry up. When he knows that the dry season is coming, he curls himself up in a mud ball. Here he sleeps until the rainy season comes again and washes his mud house away.

While in this mud ball, some of these lung-fish are dug up and sent to our country to be put into aquariums in large cities. The mud houses are sometimes so hard that men have to chisel out the fish. When the hard mud cell breaks open and the fish is put into the water, he will uncurl himself and swim away so quickly that you would never believe he had been asleep so long.

It seems strange that a fish has lungs and breathes as you do, and it is also queer that he can live in a hard mud ball; but this is one of the many ways Nature provides for the protection of her creatures.



When you visit a large city, perhaps you would like to go to the aquarium to see if you can find a lung-fish. You will probably find many other interesting African fish also.

#### THINGS TO DO

If you can find pictures of strange fishes, bring them to school and show them to the class.

You will find many pictures in Compton's *Pictured Encyclopedia* and *The Book of Knowledge*.

If you have ever visited an aquarium, tell the class about some of the interesting fish you saw there.

#### YES OR NO

Number the lines on a sheet of paper from 1 to 12.

Beside each number write "Yes" for each true statement and "No" for each statement which is not true.

1. In Africa there are two seasons during the year.
2. During the dry season it rains most of the time.
3. The African mud-fish looks like a snake.
4. He can live in the water and out of the water.
5. He does not have gills like other fishes.
6. He rolls himself up in a mud ball and sleeps during the rainy season.
7. Sometimes the mud ball is so hard that men have to chisel out the fish.
8. Some African mud-fish are brought to our country and put into aquariums.
9. When these fish are put into aquariums, they uncurl themselves and swim away.
10. No one visits the aquariums.
11. It is not strange that a fish has lungs as we do.
12. Nature has many ways of protecting her creatures.



Palm Trees



## A TREE THAT IS THE STAFF OF LIFE

What food is called "the staff of life"? Why do we call it that? Did you know that there is an African tree which is called by the same name? It is the stately coconut palm tree. It grows in many parts of Africa and is one of the most useful trees in the world.

It does not look like most of the trees you have seen. It is very tall and slender and has no branches on its trunk. At the top is a huge cluster of long, wide, green leaves that look like giant ferns. These leaves spread out from the trunk just as your fingers spread out from the palm of your hand. That is why this tree is called the palm tree.

The Africans often say that there is a use for the palm every day of the year, and when you find out how they use it, you will think this is true. It furnishes food, drink, shelter, clothing, furniture, musical instruments, and weapons for the natives.

They eat the fresh white meat of the coconut and drink the milk. They make a kind of wine out of the trunk of the tree and use the sap for making sugar.

Hats, mats, brushes, and ropes are made from the husks

of the coconuts; and baskets, fans, and hammocks are made from the palm leaves.

The African makes his hut from the trunk of the tree and covers it with the leaves. In almost every hut you will find a quiver of poisoned arrows made of palm wood, fish hooks made from the hard spines of the leaves, and a musical instrument made from the palm stems.

Many natives pound the bark of the palm tree into a coarse cloth and use it to make their clothing.

I cannot tell you all the different ways the Africans use this beautiful tree; but is it any wonder that it is called the most useful tree in the world?

#### SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

If you are interested in strange trees you will want to know about the baobab tree, the rubber tree, and the mangrove tree.

Some people say that the mangrove tree grows upside down because roots grow out of its branches.

Find out all you can about these queer trees and tell the class about them.

#### SOMETHING TO WRITE

Write all the words which name things that are made from the palm tree.

- |             |              |             |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. hut      | 6. gold      | 11. wine    |
| 2. mat      | 7. hammock   | 12. hat     |
| 3. roof     | 8. basket    | 13. sugar   |
| 4. elephant | 9. fish-hook | 14. secret  |
| 5. cloth    | 10. woman    | 15. evening |

Write the words that do not belong in each list.

1. dwelling  
apartment  
mansion  
hut  
hammock

2. hook  
husk  
line  
reel  
bait

3. vegetable  
brush  
mirror  
comb  
hair

## THE LORD OF THE JUNGLE

Did you ever see a circus parade? What animals were in it? Which animal was the most interesting to you? Many children enjoy seeing the elephant most of all. Would you like to know some wonderful things about this giant of the animal world? As you read this story, see what you learn about the elephant which you did not know before.

Some of the circus elephants come from Africa and some from India. These elephants do not look exactly alike. Can you tell them apart? It is very easy. The African elephant is much larger than the Indian elephant. His ears and teeth are much greater than those of his Indian cousin. Sometimes the ears grow so large that a native might easily hide behind one of them. The African elephant always has long tusks, while the Indian elephant is sometimes without them entirely.

If we were traveling through the jungle and came upon one of these huge beasts, we should expect to see many others close by, because elephants do not like to be alone. They travel in large herds, and one never leaves the others unless he is driven away for some mischief he has done. He then becomes a "rogue" and is one of the most dangerous animals of the jungle. None of the others will let him come near them, and he is an outcast from elephant society.

This makes him very angry and he spends the rest of his life annoying other animals and human beings. Some rogues have been known to steal into the African villages at night and trample down all the vegetables and fruit on the large plantations. Often some of the natives are killed trying to destroy this mad giant. African hunters are always looking for these dangerous beasts, and they kill them whenever they are found.

Elephants make their home in the thickest part of the jungle near the lakes or streams. You may expect to find them near Africa's largest rivers, the Niger, Zambesi, or Congo. They are always found near the water because they like to bathe and swim. Did you ever see a circus elephant taking his bath? He draws a large quantity of water up into his trunk, then he sprinkles it all over himself. If he were in the jungle he would then give himself a dust bath in the same way. The dust keeps the flies from biting him and also keeps him cool.

During the day when the African sun is hottest, you will find the elephants sleeping somewhere in the jungle shade. When the sun goes down, they come out in search of food and water. It is very interesting to watch them. They have a leader who goes first to see if danger is near. He creeps through the bushes so silently that no one can hear him. Then he stops and listens. If all is well he calls to the others and they come slowly down to the water. They

have great fun swimming and bathing; then off they go to look for food.

Elephants do not always stay in the same part of the jungle. Sometimes their favorite swimming hole dries up during the dry season, so they seek another part of the woods where water is more plentiful.

I do not need to tell you how intelligent these animals are, because you have seen them in the circus doing many wonderful things.

The African native hunts the elephant for his ivory tusks and he uses his flesh for food.



## JUMBO

The largest and most famous elephant ever captured was one from Africa. His name was Jumbo. He was born in Egypt. When he was only four feet high he was taken to London, England, and placed in the zoo. How the English children loved him! They visited the zoo every day to ride on his back and feed him peanuts. They watched him grow and grow. He grew to be eleven feet high!

One day a circus owner visited the London zoo. His name was Mr. P. T. Barnum, and he was looking for animals for his circus. He had heard that Jumbo was the largest elephant in the world, so he wanted to buy him.

"This fine elephant should be in a circus," he said. "Then all the children in the world could enjoy riding on his back and feeding him peanuts."

"I will give you ten thousand dollars for him," he said to the owner.

His offer was accepted, and Jumbo was sold.

How the English children cried! They did not want their playmate to leave the country. Jumbo did not like it either. He wanted to stay there with the other animals he had known so long.

At last the day came for him to make his journey. He



The African Elephant

seemed to know what was going to happen, and you could hear his trumpeting far from the zoo.

A great cage was built for him. It was on wheels and had one large door. The men moved it up close to Jumbo's den and opened the door. When the elephant was coaxed into the cage, the door was closed. They took him on board a large ship and brought him to America.

For several years he traveled in Mr. Barnum's circus. He was a delight to both children and grown folk.

One day while he was being loaded on the circus train in Canada, he was struck and killed by another train. He was then twenty-six years old, and he was over eleven feet high.

You may see Jumbo's skeleton in the National Museum at Washington, D. C., and his stuffed skin is in the Tufts College Museum near Boston.

#### FURTHER READING

If you have enjoyed this story of Jumbo, you may like to read "The Elephant's Child" by Rudyard Kipling. It tells an amusing story about a little Indian elephant and explains why the elephant's trunk is so long.

#### CHOOSE THE RIGHT ENDINGS

Number the lines on your paper from 1 to 9. Beside your numbers, write the correct ending for each sentence.

1. Circus elephants

Come from Africa and India.

Come from China.

Come from America.

2. African elephants are  
    Smaller than Indian elephants.  
    The same size as Indian elephants.  
    Larger than Indian elephants.
3. The African elephant  
    Has no tusks  
    Always has long tusks.  
    Has short tusks.
4. All elephants  
    Travel in herds.  
    Stay in the jungle.  
    Travel alone.
5. Rogue elephants  
    Are very timid.  
    Are very dangerous.  
    Are liked by the others.
6. Elephants make their homes  
    In the thickest part of the jungle.  
    On the plains.  
    In the water.
7. The elephant  
    Is a good swimmer.  
    Does not like the water.  
    Cannot swim.
8. Elephants  
    Never go to sleep.  
    Sleep in the daytime.  
    Sleep in the water.
9. Elephants  
    Are very intelligent.  
    Cannot do tricks.  
    Never travel with the circus.



The Village



## CHAPTER II

### THE PEOPLE OF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

We find that most of the people of central Africa are Negroes. No one knows how long they have lived on this continent; but it must have been a very long time. Many of them live in tribes much like the Indians in our country. Each tribe has a chief who rules over it.

These people build their villages near the rivers, lakes, and forests. Each village has only one street, and the houses are built on both sides of it. Around them are high walls made of mud or fences of bamboo. These walls have only one opening. At night the cattle, sheep, and goats are driven inside to keep them from being killed by wild animals. The part of the village where the cattle are kept is called the kraal.

African Negroes are very interesting people. They are brave, strong, proud, and industrious. Their skin is smooth and brown, and their teeth are as white as pearls.

In this part of Africa it is so hot that the people wear very little clothing. Many of the men and boys wear only an apron of animal skins, or a strip of white cotton cloth wrapped around their waists. The women and girls wear



bark cloth dresses or a piece of cotton cloth wrapped around the body and tied at the shoulder.

Both men and women are fond of jewelry. They wear necklaces, bracelets, and anklets made of beads, shells, brass, and ivory.

#### FURTHER READING

Many different people live in Africa. Black people, brown people, yellow people, and white people are there. In the southern part of Africa there are some small yellow people that look like brownies because of their size. They are little dwarfs that grow about four feet tall. They are very skillful little people. They make all kinds of traps to catch their game. They shoot with the bow and arrow, and make for their arrows a kind of poison which will kill the animal without spoiling the meat.

Another interesting thing about them is that they are somewhat like camels. The camel can go for days and days without water, and these little dwarfs can go for many days without food.

Ask your teacher to tell you about some other interesting people of Africa.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

Write the following sentences filling the blanks with the words below.

1. The Negroes of central Africa live in tribes much like the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Each tribe is ruled by a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Africans live in \_\_\_\_\_ near the rivers, lakes, and forests.

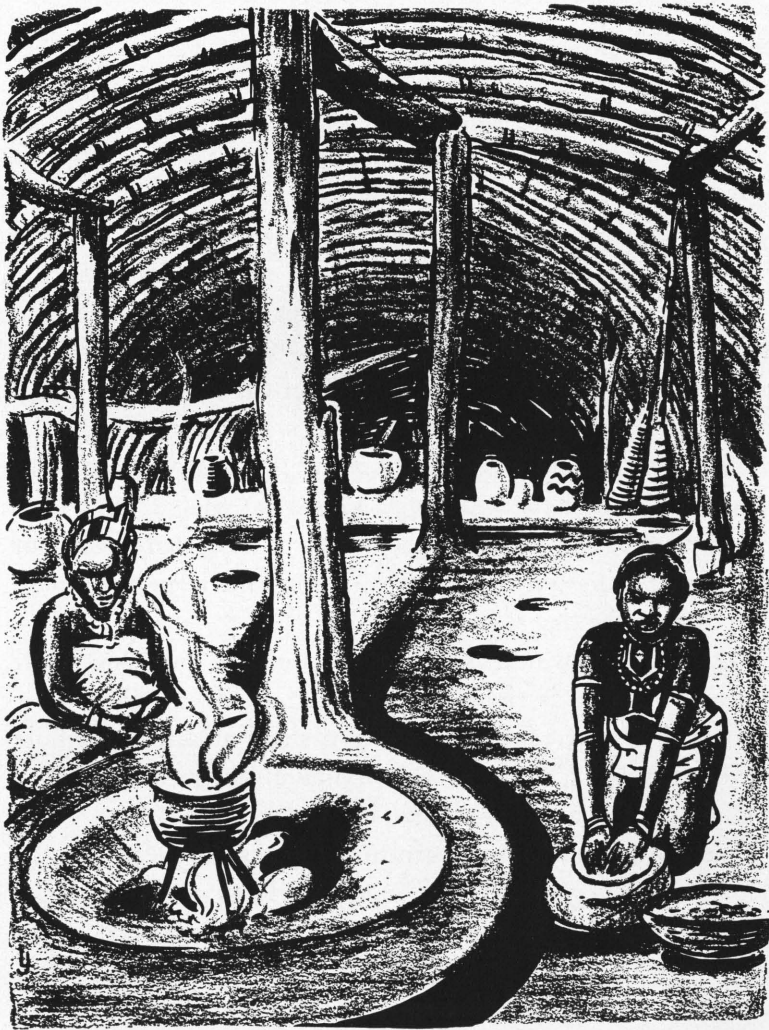
## CHILD'S STORY OF THE NEGRO

4. Around the villages are high \_\_\_\_\_ made of mud.
5. There is one \_\_\_\_\_ in the wall.
6. Every night the \_\_\_\_\_ are driven inside the wall.
7. The cattle are kept in the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. African Negroes are very \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Their \_\_\_\_\_ look like pearls.
10. They wear very little \_\_\_\_\_.

Indians  
walls  
kraal  
clothing

chief  
opening  
teeth  
grass

villages  
cattle  
brave  
trees



At Home

## CHAPTER III

### THE HOMES OF THE AFRICANS

An African village is a very queer sight. From a distance it looks like a group of haystacks. Most of the houses are round and are built of poles stuck into the ground. They are plastered with mud which hardens in the hot sun. The roofs are made of sticks covered with elephant grass or palm leaves. Many of them come to a point at the top and look like a round hat resting on the walls. These roofs keep out the heavy rains during the wet season and keep the house cool during the dry season.

There are no windows in these houses and only one small door. The floor is the earth pounded hard. In the center of it is the stove. It is not really a stove at all, but a hole in the ground where the fire is made. Here the food is cooked on the coals or boiled in clay pots.

We do not find much furniture in these homes. On the floor we see clay jars, bowls, and a pile of mats on which the family sleeps at night. On the walls hang spears, bows and arrows, baskets, fishing lines, and musical instruments.

Near each African home there is a garden where the women raise the fruit and vegetables for the family. In these gardens you will find peanuts, corn, beans, bananas,

melons, oranges, and sweet potatoes. You would like these foods, wouldn't you? But how would you like roasted locusts, caterpillars, ants, monkeys, rats, beetles, and elephant's feet? Africans eat these also.

#### THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

How is the home of the African different from yours?  
Why is it different?

What do Africans eat that you like? What African food do you dislike?

Who raises the fruits and vegetables for the African family? Why?

What do the Africans plant in their gardens?

Do any of these fruits and vegetables grow in our country?  
Name them.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE AFRICAN AT WORK

If we were to spend much time in an African village, we would find the people doing many interesting things. Some of them are farmers on the large plantations which are usually a long distance from the village. Others may tend the cattle during the day and drive them back to the kraal at night.

Many of the men spend their time hunting and fishing. They kill the elephant for his ivory tusks and the hippopotamus for his teeth and hide. They hunt the leopard for his beautiful skin and the ostrich for his feathers.

Here and there we find potters making beautiful jars, pots, bowls, and vases of clay.

Outside a hut we may see a weaver making baskets and mats. No one is idle there.

### THE AFRICAN BLACKSMITH

Probably the most interesting workers are the village blacksmiths. They are the men who make the weapons with which the Africans hunt, and the tools which they use in their gardens. Let us watch them at their work.





African Work in Iron

Outside an African hut are two men and a little boy. In front of them we see a small fire and a wide, smooth piece of iron which is used for an anvil. The boy has in his hands a large leather bellows; and, as he opens and closes it, he fans the fire and makes it burn.

One man squats before the fire and drops on it lumps of charcoal, then lumps of iron ore. This is a kind of rock that has some iron in it. As long as the iron is mixed with this rock, it cannot be used to make anything, so the blacksmith must separate them.

The heat from the fire melts the iron and it runs off. Then one of the men gathers it up and places it on the anvil. The other hammers it with a large iron hammer.

Before the iron can be made into a spear or hatchet, it must be tempered or made hard and tough. It takes many hours of heating and hammering to temper a piece of iron as the African does it.

All day long these natives are at work. The boy takes care of the fire while the men heat the iron and hammer it into shape. After many hours of hard work this little piece of iron becomes something useful.

The African Negro is the most skillful blacksmith among primitive people. He taught the world how to smelt and refine iron. He is a very patient worker. He often spends weeks on a small knife, and works for months to make a large spear or hatchet.

The iron made by these African blacksmiths is better than

most of the iron made anywhere else in the world. Other people have learned to make it more cheaply and more easily; but no one has ever made it better.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

You will enjoy reading *Negro Art Music and Rhyme* by Helen Whiting. In it you will find beautiful pictures of African blacksmiths and the useful things made by them.

## CHAPTER V

### AFRICAN MUSIC

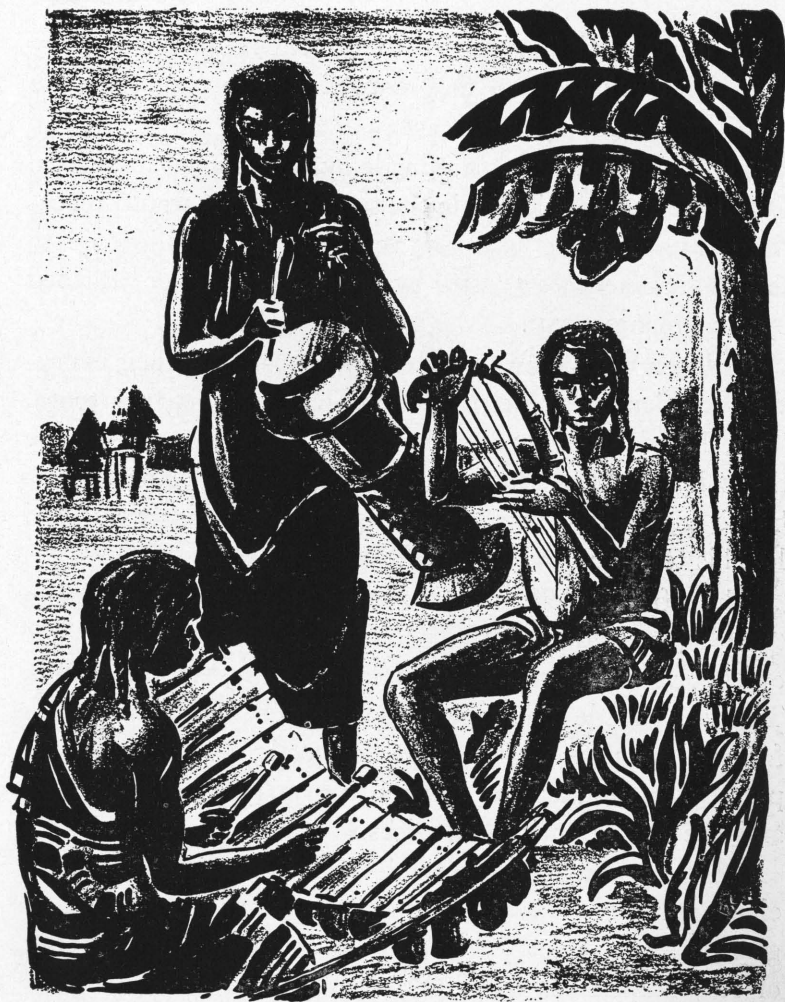
If you wish to understand the African Negro, you must know something about his music. Did you know that Africans have kept alive their history by means of songs? Through their music and art they have preserved their customs from one generation to the other.

Many years ago professional musicians trained in secret societies were found in every town. After many long periods of rehearsals, they recited family and national history. Often they have been called "living books" because they educated the natives for all of life.

African music was used during love-making, at the marriage ceremony, when a child was born, when he was initiated into the tribal cult; in hunting, farming, and fishing. It was used also for recreation such as telling tales, riddles, and proverbs; and for inspiring the warriors to fight bravely.

This music was usually accompanied by rhythmic action and dancing. The singers would click the fingernails of their thumbs while the onlookers patted their feet, clapped their hands, and swayed their bodies.

Africans danced for love and they danced for hate. They danced for joy and they danced for grief. They danced to



Musicians



bring success and they danced to prevent misfortune. They danced for religion and they danced just to pass away the time.

All African music was not made by professional musicians. Often the audience joined in the singing. They would repeat the refrain or make up a new verse which added interest to the song. Sometimes a passer-by might be praised or ridiculed by the singing group.

Children were known to make up songs about their everyday experiences. When one child had lost his first tooth, he gathered his playmates about him for a dance. Then he threw his tooth on top of his hut. The group clapped their hands and danced in a circle singing that their friend had lost his tooth and could not eat salt.

The African's love of music and dancing has inspired him to make many different kinds of musical instruments. The oldest original rhythmic instruments are the African drums. They were made of hollowed logs with heads of animal skins fastened by pegs driven into the wood. Small ones were played by hand, and large ones were played with one stick and one hand or with two sticks.

"Talking drums" were made from the skin of a female elephant's ear. These interesting instruments were used to give notice of danger, the approach of a stranger or enemy, or of death, fire, or a call to arms.

Rattles were made of gourds filled with stones, beans, or shells. Trumpets were made of horn, reed, wood, or ivory.



Long before pianos were invented, the Africans used a musical instrument similar to it. They called it a marimba. The keys were made of palm wood instead of ivory, and the player beat upon them with wooden hammers instead of playing on them with his fingers. In many large orchestras you will see a musical instrument that looks very much like the marimba. It is called a xylophone.

Did you know that Africans were the first people to use stringed instruments? Hundreds of years ago they played sweet music on an instrument which was similar to our mandolin. It had five long strings that were plucked with the fingers.

Music has always played an important part in African life.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

If you wish to hear the Africans play their "talking drums" and sing work songs, children's songs, and hunting songs, listen to Folkways Record P427 Folk Music of the Western Congo.

You will enjoy the pictures of musical instruments in *Negro Musicians and Their Music* by Maud Cuney-Hare and *Negro Art Music and Rhyme* by Helen Whiting.

Write the following sentences filling the blanks with the correct word.

1. In making music the Africans used their \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ instruments.
2. Africans kept alive their \_\_\_\_\_ by means of songs.
3. Professional musicians were trained in secret \_\_\_\_\_.
4. African musicians have been called living \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Africans like to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. All African music was not made by professional \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Children often \_\_\_\_\_ songs about everyday experiences.
8. The oldest original rhythm instruments were African \_\_\_\_\_.
9. "Talking drums" were made from the skin of a \_\_\_\_\_ elephant's ear.
10. A marimba is similar to a \_\_\_\_\_.
11. A \_\_\_\_\_ looks like a marimba.
12. Africans were the first people to use \_\_\_\_\_ instruments.

voices	sing	drums	stringed
history	piano	dance	made up
books	bodies	female	musicians
societies	xylophone	musical	



The Story-teller

## CHAPTER VI

### AFRICAN STORY-TELLERS AND FOLK TALES

One of the occupations which Africans seem to enjoy most is story-telling. Sometimes the story-teller is an old woman in the village. Sometimes he is a man who travels from one village to another. Always he is one of the most respected persons among the natives.

At evening when the tasks of the day are finished and the sun has gone down, a large group gathers in a circle in the village street or camp to listen to the telling of folk tales. Some of these are old, old stories which parents have told their children from one generation to another. Others are tales which the story-tellers make-up or imagine themselves. They always tell them in a very delightful way. Sometimes a part of the story is sung or crooned; other parts are acted. When the story-teller is acting the part of a beast, he shrieks and howls just like the animal, and the listeners scream with laughter.

Would you like to read some of the folk-tales which were told by these traveling story-tellers?

#### THE LAZY JACKAL AND THE LION

In this story there is a quarrel between the Jackal and the

Lion. As you read it, see if you can tell what caused the quarrel and how it was finally ended.

Once upon a time during the hot season, all the streams dried up in the jungle, and the animals had no water to drink. All of them were very thirsty, so they tried to find a spring.

They searched for a long time and finally found one. Very little water came from it because the hole in the ground had not been dug deep enough.

"Let us dig a deeper hole," said the lion, "so we can have plenty of cool water."

Now one of the animals was a very lazy fellow. He was the jackal. He would not help the other animals at all; so when they finished digging the hole, they said:

"Since Mr. Jackal would not help us, let us keep him from drinking any water at our spring."

The lion promised to guard the spring and said he would eat the jackal if he caught him near the place.

One very hot day the jackal came running up to the spring. He pretended he was not thirsty. He sat down near the lion and began to eat some delicious honey which he pulled out of his bag.

"I am not at all thirsty, Mr. Lion," he said. "This honey is much better than that spring water."

"You might let me try it," said the lion.

The jackal gave him some and the lion enjoyed it so much that he asked for more.



"You will enjoy the flavor of the honey more," said the jackal, "if you lie on your back and let me pour it down your throat."

The lion did as he was told, and began to wave his great paws in delight, thinking of the feast in store for him.

"I am afraid of those great paws of yours," said the jackal. "Let me tie them up; then I can lean over you and pour the honey down safely."

The lion was very foolish. He let the jackal tie his paws tightly with a strong rope. Then the jackal laughed loudly.

"Now I have you," he said, and trotted over to the spring and drank all the water he wanted. Then he started to run home.

"Oh Mr. Jackal!" roared the lion, "please do not leave me tied up like this. The other animals will make fun of me, and I shall not be their king. If you will untie these ropes, I will give you all the water you want."

At first the jackal did not know what to do. After he thought awhile, he decided to trust the lion and let him loose. So the jackal released the lion and gave him more of his honey. Then the lion told all the other animals to forgive the jackal and allow him to drink at their spring. From that time all the animals lived happily in the jungle.

There is an old African proverb which says, "He who forgives ends the quarrel." Can you give an example of the proverb in this story?



If you have enjoyed this story, you may wish to listen to Folkways Record FP103 Folk Tales from West Africa.

### THE BOASTING CATERPILLAR

This is a good story to read aloud. Study it very carefully so that you can read it to the class. Try to say all the animals' speeches just as you think they said them.

If the class should dramatize the story, which part would you want to take?

A little caterpillar lived in the jungle not far from the home of a rabbit. He was very proud of his black and yellow suit, so one day he strutted out to show it.

While he was going down the path, a terrible storm arose. The rain fell so fast that he had to run for shelter. He went to the home of the rabbit, and finding him away, he crawled into his house. Here he stayed until the shower was over.

Before he could start home, the rabbit came back. He was surprised to find on the ground near his door some small animal tracks.

"Some one is in my house!" he cried. "Who is it?"

The little caterpillar was so frightened he did not know what to do; so he answered in a gruff voice, "I am the son of Great Chief Ungwa! I am a terrible fellow! I can crush the elephant with one foot!"

The rabbit was frightened. He had never in his life heard such a voice. He did not try to enter his house but went away saying, "I must find some one to help me get this terrible beast out of my house, if I want to live in it again."

Soon he met the leopard. He told him that there was a terrible beast in his house, and asked him if he would come and make him leave. When the leopard reached the rabbit's home he growled, "Who is in this house?"

The caterpillar replied in a much louder voice, "I am the son of Great Chief Ungwa! I am a terrible fellow! I can crush the elephant with one foot!"

"I am very sorry, Friend Rabbit," said the leopard, "but if this terrible creature can crush the elephant with one foot, he will do the same to me."

Then the leopard and the rabbit started away together. They met the rhinoceros, and the rabbit asked him if he would help him. The rhinoceros went to the rabbit's house and talked to the caterpillar, but when he heard him say he could crush the elephant, he told the rabbit he could not help him.

Now a little frog came jumping along. He saw the animals standing before the rabbit's house, and he wondered what was the matter. When he learned that a terrible beast was inside, he hopped up to the door and asked who was inside just as the others had done. He heard from the caterpillar the same answer. But the frog was not afraid. Instead of leaving he went up to the door and shouted, "I who am greater than Ungwa have come! My muscles are as hard as stone and I am as ugly as I am strong! Come out from the house of my friend, the rabbit!"

When the caterpillar heard this, he was frightened. He

trembled from head to foot; and when he saw the frog coming toward him, he cried, "O please do not kill me! I have done no harm! I am only a little caterpillar."

The animals dragged the little fellow out of the rabbit's house. Then all of them laughed because they had been fooled by a little caterpillar.

Why did the animals forgive the caterpillar? What might have happened if they had not forgiven him? Why was it better for them to let him go? What part of this story do you like best?

There is an old African proverb which says, "He who boasts much cannot do much." Tell how this is illustrated in the story.

#### SOMETHING TO WRITE

Copy the following sentences, leaving out the words which tell something that is not true.

1. The caterpillar lived in the (river, sky, jungle).
2. He was proud of his new (suit, house, garden).
3. When the rain fell he crawled into the rabbit's (den, house, closet).
4. The caterpillar pretended that he was a (terrible, kind, good) creature.
5. He frightened the (leopard, cat, dog).
6. The (rhinoceros, frog, elephant) was not afraid.
7. He made the caterpillar (tremble, eat, sing).
8. All the animals (forgave, beat, hopped) the caterpillar.

## THE OLD WOMAN AND THE SLY LITTLE RABBIT

In this folk tale, the story teller has imagined that human beings can talk to animals and they can understand each other.

Do you enjoy stories like this one?

A long time ago a little old woman lived in a small grass hut near a large plantation. She was very, very poor; and she had no one to care for her. She was a good cook, and even the animals had heard of her delicious porridge and coconut cakes.

One day when she was sitting outside her hut, a little rabbit came by. He went to her and said, "You are growing old, and you have no child to work for you. Why don't you adopt me? I will go to the field and make your garden, and you can give me my food."

The old woman was very happy.

"You are right," she said; "and I am glad you want to help me. Whenever you come from the field, I shall have your dinner ready for you."

Then she gave the rabbit a spade, a hoe, a rake, and some seed to sow. Every day the rabbit left the house, telling the old woman he was going to work in the garden. Every

evening when he came home she had his meals ready for him.

But the rabbit was not doing any work at all. He would go near a large plantation where some people were working and lie down and sleep all day. When dinner time came, he hurried to the old woman's hut to get his food.

One day she asked him how the garden was growing.

"Just fine!" he said. "Let me take you to see it."

She went with him, and he showed her the large plantation. She was well pleased and told the rabbit he was a very good farmer.

Soon it was time to gather the crops. Both of them went to the plantation, and the old woman began to gather the grain. Just then the owner of the plantation came out to see who could be taking his grain.

"What are you doing on my plantation?" he asked.

"I am cutting the grain my child has raised," she answered.

The owner laughed. "Your child has done no work," he said. "Every morning he has come to the edge of my plantation and has gone to sleep with his garden tools beside him."

Then the poor old woman knew the rabbit had not told her the truth. While she and the farmer were talking, the sly little fellow had slipped away; therefore she could not punish him.

But the farmer was a kind man.

"You may have all the grain you want," he said, "if you will cook me some coconut cakes."

When the dry season came, the old woman had all the food she needed.

Were the human qualities of the rabbit desirable or undesirable?

If the rabbit were a human being, would he be a good citizen? Why? Have you ever seen someone who reminded you of the rabbit?

Write the following words which best describe the rabbit. Write those that best describe the old woman.

lazy	charitable
rich	wealthy
dishonest	kind
good	unfaithful
disobedient	cowardly
cunning	grateful
sly	deceiving
poor	neat
thrifty	feeble
industrious	ungrateful

#### SOMETHING TO DRAW

1. The old woman cooking in her hut.
2. The old woman sitting outside her hut talking to the rabbit.
3. The rabbit going to work with his spade, hoe, and rake.
4. The rabbit watching the men work on the plantation.
5. The rabbit lying in the shade near the plantation.
6. The old woman and the rabbit eating supper.



## THE NEIGHBORS' BARGAIN

The primitive African is very intelligent, and his ideas about right and wrong are just like ours. As you read this story, see if you can tell why it is a good example of our golden rule. What is the golden rule?

Zambi and Selus were two neighbors who lived side by side. Zambi owned a very fine elephant which he loved dearly. Every day the elephant worked for him and helped him earn his living.

One day Selus went to Zambi and said, "Friend Zambi, please lend me your elephant today. I want him to do some work for me. I shall bring him back tomorrow."

"You may use him, Friend Selus," replied Zambi. "Take care of him and please return him tomorrow."

Selus took the elephant and went home. Early the next morning he went to Zambi's house looking very sad.

"I have bad news, Friend Zambi," he said. "Your elephant died while working for me. What shall I do? I can pay you for him or buy you another elephant."

Zambi was very angry. "You shall do neither," he exclaimed. "Give me back my elephant or I will kill you!"

Selus knew he could not do this, so he explained, "But your elephant is dead, Friend Zambi, and I cannot give him back to you."

"Then I will kill you!" screamed Zambi.

Selus ran home and told his wife what Zambi had said.

"I think I know a plan that will change his mind," she said. "Put my best water jug behind the door."

Selus did as he was told. Then they sat down and waited. After a while Zambi came to the door and knocked loudly.

"Who is there?" asked the wife.

"It is Zambi! Your husband killed my elephant, and I have come to kill him!"

"Open the door and come in," she said.

When Zambi opened the door, the beautiful water jug fell to the floor and broke into a hundred pieces.

"You have broken my beautiful jug!" cried the wife. "Give it back to me!"

"I cannot give it back to you," said Zambi. "But I will pay for it or buy another."

"I do not want another!" screamed the wife. "I want that one! Give it back to me or my husband will kill you!"

"But I can't give it back!" cried Zambi. "It is broken into a hundred pieces."

"Then my husband will kill you."

Now Zambi knew that Selus and his wife had played on him a clever trick, so he said, "I have been very foolish. I was wrong to say I must have back my elephant. Give me another, and I will be satisfied."

Then Selus agreed, "If you do not try to kill me, I will

not kill you. Let us be friends. Give me another jug, and I will be satisfied."

So the neighbors did not quarrel any more and ever afterwards lived peaceably as friends.

This is another excellent story to read orally. Study it so that you can read it to the class without making any mistakes.

How many people are speaking in the story? Be sure to change your voice so that the class will be able to recognize each character.

#### SOMETHING TO WRITE

Write the following sentences filling the blanks with the correct words.

1. Zambi and Selus were two .....
2. Zambi owned a very fine .....
3. The elephant helped Zambi earn his .....
4. Selus ..... Zambi's elephant.
5. The elephant ..... while working for Selus.
6. Zambi was very .....
7. He wanted to ..... Selus.
8. Zambi's wife was very .....
9. She and her husband played a ..... on Selus.
10. After this the neighbors became ..... again.

If you have enjoyed this story, you may like to read *Negro Folk Tales* by Helen Whiting.

## CHAPTER VII

### PLAYTIME IN AFRICA

The African children do not have much work to do, so a great part of their time is spent in having fun. Would you like to know some of the games they play?

Many of their games are just like ours. They play tag, run races, play horse, and swing high into the air on swings made of bark rope.

In any African village you will find the very small boys and girls playing together; but when they grow older, they do not play the same games. The boys enjoy playing with bows and arrows, balls, and tops.

One of their most enjoyable games is played with little tops made of corn cobs. There are two sides in this game. Ten or twelve boys are on each side. They sit in a wide open space in two lines facing each other and about eight feet apart. Each player stands a corn cob on end in front of him. Then he winds up his top and spins it across the clear space trying to knock over the corn cob of the player opposite him. This game is very exciting and the players shout with laughter when a corn cob "soldier" falls down. The side which knocks down the more "soldiers" wins the game.



At Play



## HIDE AND SEEK

All the African boys and girls play "hide-and-seek" and what fun they have! They have many places to hide. There is the tall elephant grass, and in most places you will find clay ant hills so large that even a man can easily hide behind them.

You have played this game many times, I am sure; but perhaps you have not played it as the Africans do. Sometimes the seeker pretends he is a lion, and the other players are hares. The little hares scamper into the grass, and the lion tries to catch one for his dinner. If he succeeds, the player who is caught becomes the lion. Some children may have one place called home. This is usually a tree or ant hill. If the hares reach home without being caught, they are safe and the lion has no dinner.

## WHAT THE GIRLS PLAY

When the little African girls play, they try to imitate their mothers. They play house, taking care of their queer little dolls which they make out of clay or corn cobs. These corn cob dolls do not look at all like the pretty dolls you have. They are just a dry cob dressed up. For hair they have short grass which is pasted on top of the head, and for eyes they have two black beads. Some girls wrap their babies in a blanket while others dress them in a short dress made from the bark of the palm tree. Would you like to play with a doll like that?



## LITTLE TOY SHOPS

In Africa you will not find large toy shops as we have in our country. Many little African boys and girls make their own toys out of the clay of the ant hills. If this clay has become hard, they pound it up and wet it. Then it can be molded like our plasticene. The girls make dolls, pots, bowls, baskets, and little doll houses just like their own homes. They cover them with sticks and grass and put their clay babies inside.

The boys make clay men, cattle, and sheep. Then they build a kraal where they keep their animals at night. After all the clay toys are made, they are baked in the coals or in the hot sun. This makes them hard and they are not easily broken.

## SOMETHING TO DO

With your plasticene or clay model some toys of the African children.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AFRICAN ART

You have learned the importance of music in the life of the African Negro. His art also helps him to enjoy his way of life.

He adorns himself with beautifully carved combs, rings, bracelets, neck bands and anklets.

From the fiber of the palm tree he weaves beautiful cloth, which he embroiders in geometric and animal designs.

His clay jugs, jars, pots, and bowls are artistically made. He is also known for his fine work in leather and bronze.

But his most interesting works of art are his sculptures and masks; and to appreciate them you must understand some of his religious beliefs.

Primitive African Negroes are among the most religious peoples of the world; but their religion is far different from ours. They do not believe in one God as we do.

They believe in animism. They think everything has life and a soul; men, animals, earth, water, minerals, and plants. They also believe in magic and ancestor worship.

Out of their beliefs have grown some of the African's most noted works of art, his sculptures.

Many of these statues are carved from wood. When a

tree is cut down for this purpose, the priest or medicine man performs a religious ceremony. Usually both the sculptor and the purchaser of the statue take part in this rite.

Then the sculptor starts his work. He carefully cuts off a part of the trunk or limb, and with a small instrument resembling an adz, he begins to chop out the statue.

He never traces a design but cuts directly into the wood. He works with a rhythm just as the African dances to a rhythm.

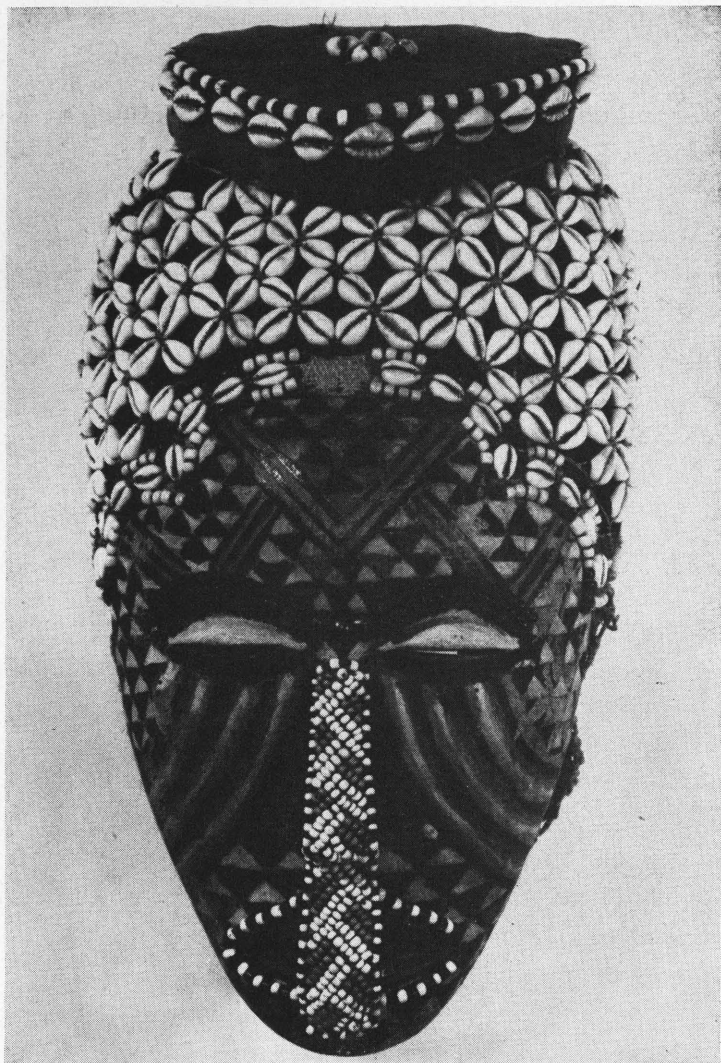
He does not try to make something beautiful, but something useful. The idea of beauty or ugliness never occurs to him. His work will be good if it is effective, and it will be bad if it is not.

Skillfully he carves as he watches the figure slowly emerge from the wood. When it is finished, the priest blesses it and it becomes a fetish for its owner.

Just as we have faith in God and His goodness, the African has faith in his fetish and its magic power. If it ceases to be effective, he throws it away and buys another one. Because of this practice, African sculptors are busy people.

They carve other wonderful works of art which are interesting to all who see them. These are the masks used in some of their religious ceremonies.

When the boys and girls reach manhood or womanhood, they are initiated into secret societies. At these secret meetings, they are taught how to become good wives or husbands, good mothers or fathers, and worthy adult members of the



Ivory Mask—Benin Kingdom, Nigeria, West Africa  
(9½ inches high)  
(By permission, Ladislav Segy, African Sculpture Speaks,  
New York, 1952)

community. They are taught also to respect the aged, to conquer fear, and to endure pain.

To help them remember these teachings, sometimes their faces are deeply scratched in interesting designs. They wear these scars the rest of their lives.

To us this may seem cruel, but it is not so different from the way some parents punish their children. They spank, switch, or slap them to inflict pain so that they will remember to obey.

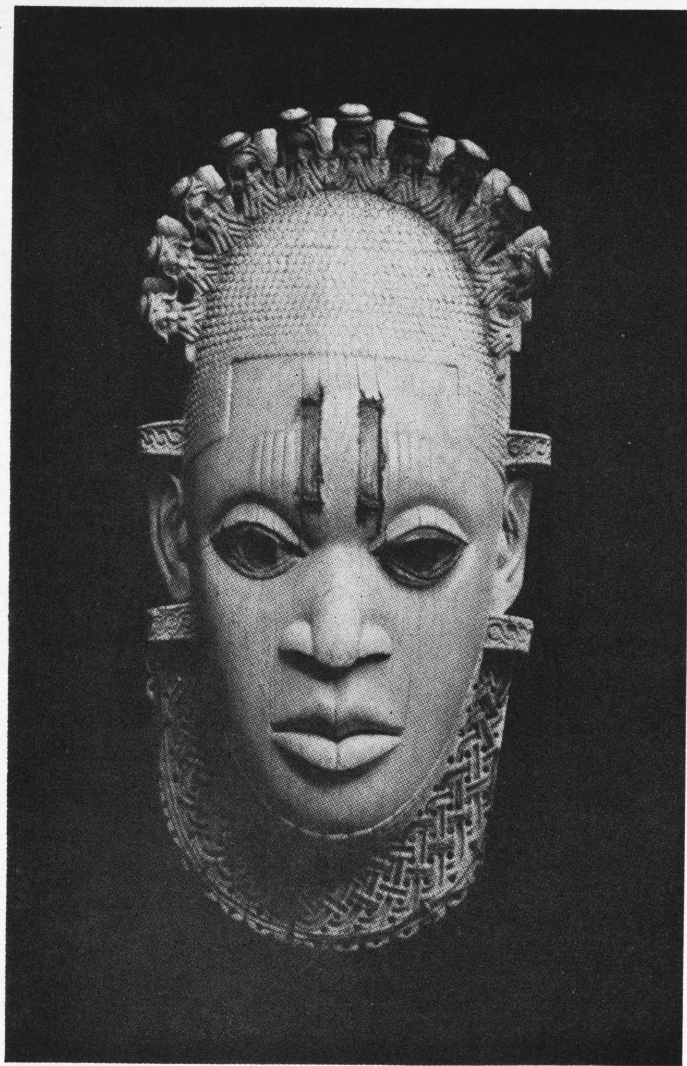
During a part of these initiation ceremonies, the young people wear masks which represent their life as a child. At the close of the ceremony, the mask is sometimes discarded to show that the youth has "put away childish things." Often these young people are given a smaller mask which they keep to use as a fetish. They may carry it with them or use it as a pendant.

The African sculptor carves from wood or ivory many of these masks. He decorates them with cowrie shells, beads, geometric designs and scarification marks. He spends much time on one mask, working with it until it pleases him.

A sculptor is a very important person in an African community. In some tribes, only one with a gift for carving becomes a sculptor. Often the magician and sculptor are the same person. In many instances the skill has been handed down from father to son.

The sculptor loves his work, and for a very good reason. He knows he is making something that will bring to his





Mask—Bakuba, Belgian Congo (14 inches high)  
(By permission, Ladislav Segy, African Sculpture  
Speaks, New York, 1952)



people freedom from fear, freedom from anxiety, freedom from want—something that will bring them happiness.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

Look in *African Sculpture Speaks* by Ladislav Segy and you will find many interesting pictures of African art.

Whenever you visit an art gallery, ask to see the African exhibit.

## CHAPTER IX

### FAMOUS AFRICAN KINGS

Some of the most wonderful African sculptures about which you have read, were carved hundreds of years ago, during the reign of powerful African kings who encouraged their people in cultural pursuits. Let me tell you about two of these rulers.

Mansa Musa was the ruler of the vast Mandingo Empire of West Africa. During his early life he believed in animism, but later he was converted and became a Moslem. Then he wanted to go to Arabia to visit Mecca, the sacred city of the Moslems.

The first time the outside world learned about this great man was when he made his pilgrimage to Mecca. The wealth and splendor of his soldiers with their shining spears and plumed headdress were great surprises to the people along the roads which they traveled. There were 60,000 people in this parade and they carried more than a ton of gold and fine jewels. How surprised were the people at this spectacle!

Another king, Askia The Great, who ruled the Songhay Empire, was well known for his interest in the welfare of his people. He made just laws and held trial by jury.

During his reign, the empire grew. He started trade and the exchange of goods with other countries. He encouraged the people to work in sculpture and in art.

He operated many schools for the African children. They were not schools like ours. The elders taught the children by word-of-mouth, and the children used their memories to retain what they had learned. There were no books, no pencils, no materials, no desk; but these children were given the education they needed for their way of life.

When Askia learned of famous teachers in other lands, he asked some of them to come to teach in his schools. His works were so helpful that he has been called a great man by writers of history.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

Write the following sentences filling the blanks with the words below.

1. Two famous African kings were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Mansa Musa ruled the \_\_\_\_\_ empire in West Africa.
3. He was converted and became a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. He went on a \_\_\_\_\_ to Mecca.
5. Mansa Musa and Askia The Great encouraged the people in \_\_\_\_\_ pursuits.
6. Askia The Great was interested in the \_\_\_\_\_ of his people.
7. He made \_\_\_\_\_ laws.
8. He started \_\_\_\_\_ with other countries.
9. He operated \_\_\_\_\_ for the African children.
10. African children were taught by \_\_\_\_\_.

Askia The Great  
trade  
Moslem  
cultural

welfare  
pilgrimage  
Mandingo  
schools

just  
word-of-mouth  
Mansa Musa

## CHAPTER X

### AFRICAN MYTHS

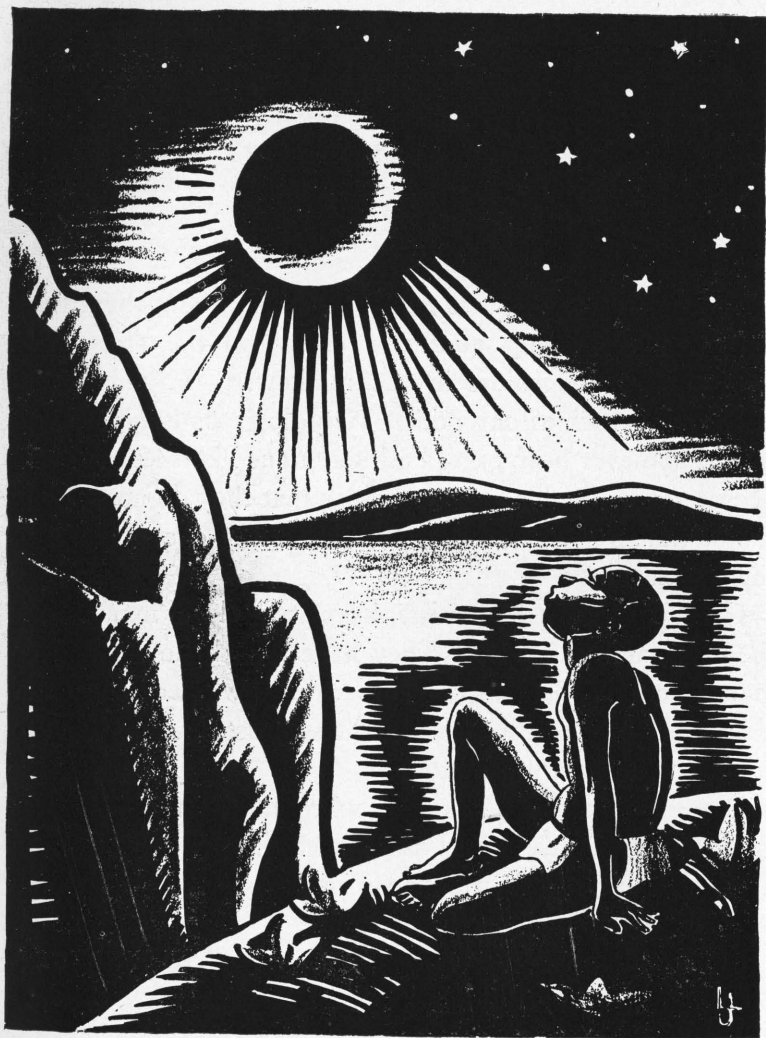
When children begin to notice the world about them they ask many interesting questions. Why do the stars fall? What makes the colors in the rainbow? Why does the giraffe have such a long neck? Why do frogs hop?

Did you ever hear a child ask questions like these? Little people wonder about so many things that they do not understand, and they are not satisfied until some one explains to them such things.

Great men, called scientists, have studied for many years the earth and its people. They have found the answers to many questions that children and some grown people wonder about. We now read books that the scientists have written to explain many obscure matters.

But many, many years ago, when the human race was young, the primitive child asked such questions as children do now. Since there were no scientists then, how do you think these questions were answered?

The people made up or imagined strange stories that explained what they did not understand. These stories are called myths. They are very much like fairy tales because they tell of things that can never happen; but in one way



Myth



they are different from fairy tales because the people believed them.

Every nation on earth has imagined and believed in myths at some time. When we study these tales, we learn much about the lives of these early peoples.

Would you like to know some of the things the African children wondered about? Would you like to know some of the questions they asked about the world in which they lived, and how these questions were answered?

Let us read some of these beautiful stories that the African mothers told their children in answer to their many questions.

The first myth tells a tale about the hippopotamus. Look at his picture on the next page and it will help you to enjoy the story.



## THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

The word, hippopotamus, means "river horse" in the Greek language. But this huge animal does not look like a horse, does he? Why do you think the Greeks called him that? It was because of the way he uses his short fat legs when he is swimming. He gallops just like a horse.

Does the hippopotamus look like any American animal? Does he look like an American animal in one way and like another some other way?

The teeth of the hippopotamus provide ivory for the natives. His hide makes whips, and his flesh is used for food. Many animals of this kind are killed by the Africans every year. One of them provides the meat for a great feast.

## WHY THE HIPPOPOTAMUS LIVES IN THE WATER

Did you ever see a hippopotamus in a circus parade? How is his cage different from those of the other animals?

In Africa the hippopotamus spends most of his time in the water. The African children wondered why he stayed in the water all day with only his little pig eyes and nostrils above the surface. They wondered why he came out to get his food only at night.

Here is a myth which some African mothers told their children to explain this queer habit of this strange animal.

### I

#### THE HIPPO'S FEAST

A long, long time ago the hippopotamus, whose name was Isantim, was one of the biggest kings on the land. Only the elephant was larger than he. The hippo had six large, fat female servants of whom he was very fond. He had also a large fat wife whom he loved very dearly.

Now and then he used to give to all the people a great feast. But strange as it may seem, although every one knew the hippo, no one except his wife and servants knew his name.

At one of the feasts, just as the people were going to sit down, the hippo said, "You have come to feed at my table,

but none of you know my name. If you cannot tell me what it is, you shall go away without your dinner."

Most of the guests did not know what to say; but a few began to guess.

"It is Mugwa," said the leopard.

"Jambo!" cried the Jackal.

"Sanki!" roared the lion.

"No, you cannot guess it," said the hippo; and as they could not, they started away leaving behind them all the good food. Just then the tortoise arose and yelled, "Wait! I want to ask a question!" Then turning to the hippo, he said, "What will you do if some one tells you your name at the next feast?"

The hippo said that he would be so ashamed of himself that he and his whole family would leave the land and for the future would dwell in the water.

## II

### HOW THE ANIMALS LEARNED HIS NAME

Now it was the custom for the hippo and his wife and servants to go down to the river every morning and evening to wash and drink. The tortoise knew this; so one day he made a small hole in the middle of their path. He buried himself in this hole leaving outside a large part of his shell.

Soon the hippo and his family came along. They did not see the tortoise buried in the road, and the wife stum-

bled over his shell. "Oh, Isantim, my husband," she cried, "I have hurt my foot!"

At this the tortoise was very happy and went joyfully home, as he had found out the hippo's name.

Soon afterwards the hippopotamus gave another great feast. When the food was placed on the table, and the guests were ready to dine, he arose as before and said, "You have come to feed at my table, but none of you know my name. If you cannot tell my name, you shall go away without your dinner."

The tortoise then shouted as loud as he was able, "Your name is Isantim!" A great cheer went up from all the people, and they sat down and enjoyed the feast.

When the dinner was over, the Hippo and his family went down to the river, and they have always lived in the water from that day till now. Although they come on shore to feed at night, you never find a hippo on land in the daytime.

#### FURTHER READING

If you have enjoyed this story, I am sure you will want to read the following myths in *African Myths* by Carter Godwin Woodson:

"How the Dog Became the Friend of Man"

"Why Chickens Live with Man"

"Why the Cat Catches Rats"





The Leopard and the Spotted Hyena

## THE ORIGIN OF THE LEOPARD AND THE HYENA

Africa is the home of many animals with beautiful bright colors. This amusing myth is a story the Africans told their children to explain why the leopard and hyena are spotted black. Before you read it, look at the picture of a leopard and a spotted hyena, and it will help you to understand the story.

Far in the jungle lived a mother lion and her two little cubs. These little fellows were very mischievous. They often ran away from home and wandered near the village.

One day when they were playing at the edge of the woods, they saw some warriors marching by.

"How beautiful those men are!" exclaimed one little fel-



low. "They have painted their faces. Let us paint ourselves too."

"But we have no paint," said the other.

"I know where there is some black paint," coaxed his brother. "Let us have some fun." So off they went to find the bucket of black paint.

One of the cubs picked up the brush and began painting beautiful black spots on his brother's back. When he had finished, the spotted cub began to paint him.

Just then some one called out, "A calf has been lost!" The spotted cub was so excited he threw the paint bucket at his brother and ran to see if he could find the calf.

Late that evening both of the little fellows went home. Their mother was at the door waiting for them. When she saw these strange creatures coming up the path, she closed the door saying, "Don't come in here. You don't look like my children. You are not lion cubs."

And she was right. They were no longer lions. The spotted one became the father of the leopards, and the little one who had the bucket of paint thrown at him was the first hyena.

What do you think made the African imagine that the leopard had been carefully painted, while the hyena had the bucket of paint thrown on him?

#### SOMETHING TO DRAW

Draw the following pictures that illustrate this story.

1. A mother lion and her two little cubs in the jungle.
2. The little cubs playing at the edge of the woods.
3. A mud-fish swimming in the water.
4. Some African warriors marching down the path.
5. One little cub painting black spots on his brother's coat.
6. The spotted cub throwing the paint bucket at his brother.

## HOW THE AFRICAN GAINED THE GIFT OF SONG

One day a mighty African hunter went out into the forest in search of big game. He did not want to kill the little hare or deer that scampered through the woods as he passed by. He wished to kill a lion or some other large beast of the jungle. On and on he tramped, but no big game could he find.

At last he sat down to rest on a large stump. While he was sitting there, some strange and pleasing sounds came to his ears.

"What is that?" he thought. Such strange and beautiful sounds he had never heard!

From where did they come? It sounded as if they were in the trees behind him.

Nearer and nearer came the sweet music.

Suddenly he saw in the grass dancing in a ring hundreds of little forest spirits. They were beautiful little brown creatures about one foot tall.

What sweet sounds they made as they danced over the grass! "What made the sounds?" the hunter asked himself.

He thought at first that it was their dancing on the grass; but as they came nearer, he saw that their lips were moving and the sound came from their little mouths.



The "Origin of Music."

Soon they disappeared leaving the hunter alone.

He picked up his spear and started home, thinking only of the music he had heard. When he reached his hut, he sat down and tried to imitate the sounds of the forest spirits.

After a long while, he found that he could make with his voice the same sweet music.

He taught other villagers how to sing, and they always remembered it was from this mighty hunter that the African gained the gift of song.

## CHAPTER XI

### HOW AFRICANS CAME TO AMERICA

You have read many stories of the Negroes in their African home. Would you like to know how these people first came to our country?

In Africa the natives lived in tribes just as the American Indians did a long time ago. Each tribe had a chief who ruled over it. Sometimes the chief of one tribe would quarrel with the chief of another tribe. Often they would have war. When they fought they would capture from their enemies many warriors. Some of these captives were made slaves. After a while there were many such slaves in Africa.

At this time our country needed workers on the large plantations, or farms, in the South and in the mines in Latin America; so men went to Africa to buy slaves.

The African chiefs sold many of these captured warriors to the white men who brought them to America and sold them to the owners of the large plantations and mines.

Not all of the slaves were bought from chiefs. Sometimes the slave-catchers captured or kidnapped the Negroes.

Although most of the slaves who were brought to our country were sold in the South to work on the plantations or in the mines in Latin America, some were bought by North-



ern white people, and they did other kinds of work. Often these men and women were very kindly treated and some of them were given responsible positions. Some women became companions in households while it was not uncommon to find the men managing the business of the plantations. Such slaves were often able to purchase their freedom, and by their thrift to become famous men and women, bringing much honor to the Negro.

One of the best loved Negro poets was brought to America as a slave and became the companion of a Northern white lady. Her name was Phillis Wheatley. Would you like to read the story of her life?

## CHAPTER XII

### PHILLIS WHEATLEY

You have read how the little African boys and girls enjoyed themselves playing games. They became so interested in their play that they often did not know when danger was near.

One day a group of little girls were playing along the coast of Africa. They were laughing and shouting and did not see a large ship sail slowly up to the land.

This was a slave ship, and the men on it were looking for natives to take to America.

Two of the men came off the boat. They seized several of the children and took them to the ship. The other little girls ran to tell their parents; but before they reached the shore the ship had sailed away.

On and on it sailed until it came to Boston. Here some of the kidnapped children were led off the ship and taken to the slave market.

One by one they were forced to stand up on a large block of wood where everyone could see them.

Those who wished to buy slaves would call out the price they were willing to pay for them. One would call, "Ten



Phillis Wheatley

(Dollars)!" Another, "Twenty (Dollars)!" Another, "Twenty-five (Dollars)!"

Then the slave was sold to the person who offered the most money.

The healthier and stronger the slaves looked, the more the buyers had to pay for them. No one wanted a slave who looked as if he could not do any work.

Finally a very thin little girl was placed on the block. She was one of those girls who had been stolen from her playmates. The journey across the ocean had been long, and the sea had made her ill.

How weak she looked, and how sad! She had nothing on her body except an old piece of carpet that was tied around her waist.

No one offered very much for her; but she was finally sold to a wealthy tailor named John Wheatley.

He had been looking for a servant for his invalid wife and their twin children, Mary and Nathaniel. When he saw this pathetic little girl, he wanted to give her a home.

There was joy in the Wheatley household when the father returned from the slave market. Mrs. Wheatley was highly pleased. She named the child Phillis Wheatley.

All the family were kind to her. Mary learned to love her as her own sister. She discovered that Phillis was gifted, so she taught her to read and write. Soon she could read in English and Latin the most difficult books.

How she enjoyed reading poetry! During her leisure

time she learned to write poems. The Wheatleys encouraged her to develop this talent. In a few years she wrote five volumes of verse.

People throughout America heard about this amazing young woman. Many of them wrote her letters praising her work.

Phillis greatly admired George Washington, the father of our country. She wrote a poem in his honor and sent it to him.

When he replied to her letter, he complimented her on her talent as a poet and closed his letter by saying:

"If you ever come to Cambridge or near headquarters, I shall be happy to see a person so favored by the Muses and to whom Nature has been so liberal and beneficent in her dispensations.

I am with great respect,  
Your obedient, humble servant,  
GEORGE WASHINGTON"

When Phillis was eighteen, she became ill. To improve her health, the Wheatleys sent her with Nathaniel on a business trip to England.

There she learned that her fame was known abroad. The lords and ladies of London entertained her lavishly.

One day Nathaniel received the message that his mother was gravely ill. He and Phillis hurried home, arriving just before Mrs. Wheatley passed away.

The remaining years of Phillis's life were filled with sor-



row. When the other members of the Wheatley family died, she married an unsuccessful grocer, John Peters, who did not support his family. They had three children. Two of them died in infancy. When the third child came, the father left Phillis and never returned.

One cold winter day both Phillis and the baby became ill. A little before Christmas they passed away and were buried together.

Phillis Wheatley will always be remembered as the first noted American Negro poet.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. How did Phillis Wheatley come to America?
2. Why did Mr. Wheatley buy her?
3. Why did Mary Wheatley teach Phillis to read and write?
4. What did Phillis like to read most?
5. How many volumes of poetry did she write?
6. What great man praised her work?
7. Why did she go to England with Nathaniel Wheatley?
8. How was she received in England?
9. Why were the last years of her life very sad?
10. Why should we always remember Phillis Wheatley?



## CHAPTER XIII

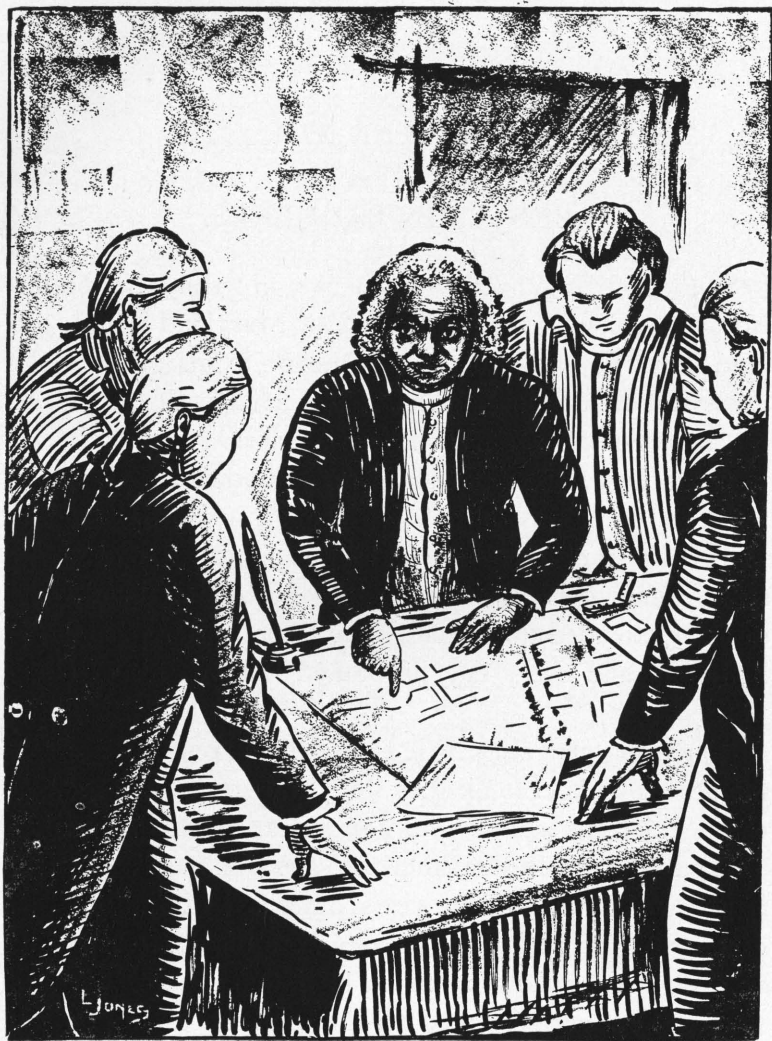
### BENJAMIN BANNEKER

While Phillis Wheatley was in Boston writing her beautiful poems, there lived in the state of Maryland a little colored boy who was also to bring honor to his people. His name was Benjamin Banneker. He lived with his parents and sisters on a large farm near Baltimore.

When he was very young his grandmother taught him to read; so by the time he was old enough to go to school, he was far ahead of the other children of his age. He entered a small country school near his home. Both colored and white children attended this school. The schoolmaster was kind to Benjamin and every day he praised him for his excellent work.

Benjamin spent very little of his time playing games with the other pupils. He liked to study and spent the large part of his time in reading. He enjoyed arithmetic, and often worked the problems of the grades above him.

Before he was fifteen years old, he had finished this country school, and as his parents were unable to send him away to college, he worked on his father's farm. He still studied, however, and read all the books he could get. He learned to work some of the most difficult problems in arith-



Benjamin Banneker

metic, and his fame spread for miles around. Often he received letters from scholars in different parts of the country asking him to solve their problems. He always answered their letters and returned their problems worked correctly.

But Benjamin was not satisfied with merely solving problems. He wanted to use in other ways his knowledge of mathematics so that he could help more people. After studying a long time, he made a clock which was one of the wonders of his day. It was said to be the first striking clock made in America. It could strike the hours, and for twenty years it ran without repair.

This clock was made with only a pocket knife and a few pieces of wood. People from many parts of the country heard about this invention and came to see this famous Negro.

Soon after Banneker invented the clock, a family named Ellicott moved into his neighborhood. They had heard about Benjamin when they were living in Pennsylvania; and as soon as they moved near him, Mr. Ellicott paid him a visit.

When he learned that Banneker liked to read, he lent him many books from his library. Some of these books were about astronomy, the study of the stars, moon, sun, and other heavenly bodies. Banneker became very much interested in astronomy, and he learned so much about the heavens that he wrote an almanac which was similar to our almanacs today. For four years his almanac was published in Philadelphia.

Benjamin Banneker's highest honor came to him when

George Washington was president of our country. President Washington wanted a number of learned men to plan a beautiful city where the presidents were to make their home, and, at the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, he chose Banneker to help with this work. This city is now Washington, D. C.

Whenever you visit Washington, you should remember that a Negro mathematician helped to plan this beautiful home of our presidents.

#### SOMETHING TO WRITE

##### CHOOSE THE RIGHT ENDINGS

1. Benjamin Banneker was taught to read by his  
grandmother  
sister  
cousin
2. He went to a  
college  
university  
country school
3. Benjamin spent most of his time  
reading  
playing  
sleeping
4. He liked to work problems in  
music  
spelling  
arithmetic
5. He invented a  
clock

cotton gin  
washer  
plow

6. His clock could  
play music  
strike the hour  
talk
7. He wrote  
an arithmetic  
an almanac  
a short story
8. He helped to plan  
Washington, D. C.  
a banquet  
a fox hunt
9. He published his almanac  
for one month  
for ten years  
for four years
10. He made his clock with  
a machine  
a knife  
a pair of scissors
11. Mr. Ellicott lent him  
books  
houses  
tools
12. Banneker was honored by  
George Washington  
a librarian  
a mathematician

## CHAPTER XIV

### A SOUTHERN PLANTATION

When the slaves were first brought to our country, they were put to work on large plantations or farms. The most important building on the plantation was the master's home or "Big House," as the slaves called it.

It was a beautiful southern colonial mansion of many spacious rooms. Around it was a large flower garden and a grove of beautiful trees. Across the front of this "Big House" was a veranda, or porch, where guests were entertained and the family gathered during their leisure time.

At one side of the house and very close to it was the schoolroom and the rooms for the tutor or teacher of the master's children.

Behind the house and a short distance from it was the kitchen. Does it seem strange to you that the kitchen was not in the house as we have them in our houses? The southern wealthy people did not want the kitchen in their homes because of the noise and odors from it.

Close to the kitchen was the well. It did not have a pump as our wells do. The water was drawn up in two buckets which hung from a pulley. When one bucket was drawn up



another was going down. Then when it came up, the other went down.

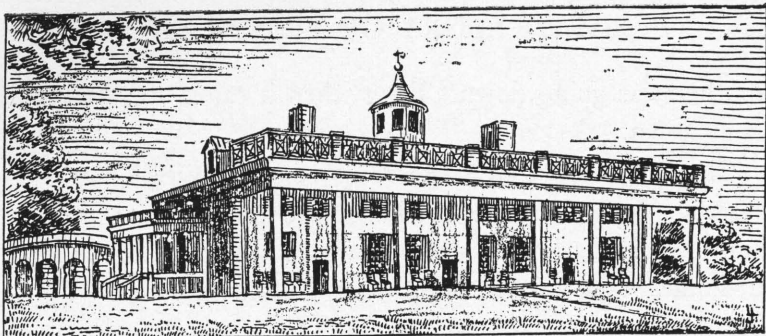
Close to the well was the dairy where the milk was prepared to be used in the kitchen. On the side of the dairy hung large tubs, boilers and pots which were used in the open air laundry. All the washing was done out of doors.

On most of the large plantations a hospital and a day nursery stood near the kitchen. Ill slaves of kind masters were taken to the hospital and cared for until they were able to work. The small babies of the slaves were cared for in the day nursery.

At the edge of the back yard was the smoke house. Here the slaves cured the hams and bacon used on the plantation. Near the smoke house were the carriage house, poultry house, ice pit, sweet potato pit, and the cabins of the servants who worked in the "Big House." These slaves did not live near those who worked in the fields.

The field hands lived in cabins close to the fields and far from the master's house. There were many cabins on the plantations because many slaves were needed to work in the cotton, cane and tobacco fields.

If the master were very wealthy and kind, he gave each family a dry airy cabin, a poultry house, and enough land for a vegetable garden. On this land the slaves raised sweet potatoes, watermelons, greens, okra, beans, onions, and any other vegetables they liked. The master gave them cornmeal, flour, and bacon.



## MOUNT VERNON

Near the slaves' cabins was the overseer's house. He was the man who watched the slaves to see that they did their work.

Not far from the overseer's house were the blacksmith shop, the stables, corn cribs, and wagon sheds.

A large southern plantation was very much like a small town. Many of them had names such as "Hurricane"; "Brierfield"; "Monticello," the home of Thomas Jefferson; and "Davis's Bend," the home of Jefferson Davis.

George Washington, our first president, called his plantation "Mount Vernon." This was his beautiful home. The large porch, or veranda, reached across the entire front of the house. Here the president entertained his friends. At Mount Vernon you can still see the furniture and many other things that were used by George Washington and his wife. The library and the bedroom are kept just as they used them.

Every year thousands of people visit this beautiful colonial mansion, and every visitor is made welcome.

George Washington had slaves, as was the custom in those days; but he believed that it was wrong for one person to own another: so when he died he set free all his slaves.

#### THINGS TO DO AND TALK ABOUT

If you have ever visited "Mount Vernon" or "Monticello" tell the class about it.

How is a plantation different from the farms you have seen? How is it like them?

What have you learned about plantation life which you did not know before?

Draw a map of a plantation and put on it the following buildings.

1. Colonial Mansion
2. Schoolroom
3. Kitchen
4. Dairy
5. Hospital
6. Cabins
7. Overseer's House
8. Stables
9. Corn Crib
10. Smoke House



On the Plantation

## CHAPTER XV

### LIFE ON THE PLANTATION

You remember that when the Negroes lived in Africa they did many different kinds of work. When they were brought to our country, they had to do many kinds of tasks too.

There were sometimes over a hundred slaves working on one plantation. There were butlers, waiters, housemaids, nurses for the little white children, nurses for the slaves, laundresses, seamstresses, dairy maids, gardeners, plowmen, hoe hands, wagoners, ox drivers, cooks, stable boys, cowherds, swineherds, millers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, spinners, and weavers.

Can you tell the kind of work done by each of these?

On many of the plantations, the servants who worked in the master's household were more kindly treated than those who worked in the fields, because they were nearer the master and his family.

These slaves learned to love the children of their master, and the children loved them in return. Often you could see the master's children and the children of the slaves playing together. They played around the kitchen door, and the cook often made little cakes and other sweet things for them.



Sometimes the white children would wander down to the cabins of the field workers. Here they would listen to the tales the slaves told their children in the evening after their work was done.

The Negroes made up or imagined most of these tales. Many of them were about animals.

Would you like to read one of them?

Here is one about a lazy old bear, and it tells why bears sleep all winter.

## I

### WHY BEARS SLEEP ALL WINTER

Many years ago Brother Bear did not sleep all winter as he does now. He was a very mischievous fellow and none of the other animals liked him. All day long, winter and summer, he trotted about teasing and playing tricks on all the other animals. He even wanted to be king of the country. The other animals were surprised at such an idea.

"I am bigger and stronger than any of you," he said. "Why shouldn't I be king?"

But the animals did not want him for their king because he was as cruel as he was strong. He played bad tricks on the small and weak animals. They dared not do anything to displease him.

One bright September day Brother Bear went out hunting. While he was gone, all the other animals had a meeting.



"Something must be done about Brother Bear," they agreed. "He grows worse every day."

"He is becoming lazy too," added Brother Squirrel. "He won't look for his food if he can take it from some one else. The other day he stole all the nuts I had piled up for use during the winter."

"He is too rough when he plays with our children," said Brother Fox. "Yesterday he nearly killed one of my poor children. What shall we do?"

"What he needs is a good long nap," said Brother Wolf. "Then we could have some peace."

The cunning little rabbit had said nothing. He was thinking of a plan to put Brother Bear to sleep.

"I know a way to get rid of him for a while," said Brother Rabbit. "He is very fond of sleeping in the dark and he always gets up as soon as the sun is up. Now if he could not see the sun, he would not know it was time to get up. He always goes to sleep in that hollow tree. Let us stop up the hole the next time he goes to sleep. If he wakes up, he will think it is still night and will go to sleep again. Then we shall have a good long rest from his mischief."

## II

### THE PLAN WORKS

Everyone thought Brother Rabbit had a very wise plan. The next night when Brother Bear crawled into the hollow



Brother Bear Wakes Up

tree, the animals brought sticks, stones, leaves, and mud and stopped up the hole so no light could get in and Brother Bear could not get out.

The next morning Brother Bear thought it was still night so he slept on. Every time he opened his eyes, it was dark, so he just rolled over and fell asleep again. All through the winter he slept, and the animals had a good long rest from his tricks.

One beautiful spring day Brother Fox told the other animals he thought Brother Bear had slept long enough.

"He might starve to death in there," he said. "Let's let him out."

So they went to the old tree and pulled the sticks and stones away so the light could get into the hole. Then off they ran so that Brother Bear could not see them.

When Brother Bear saw the light, he stretched himself and looked about. How surprised he was to find the grass and trees so green and the flowers in bloom!

"How long have I been asleep?" he asked. "I must have slept all winter. Some day I'll take another nap like that."

Then off he went to find something to eat. Ever since then Brother Bear has found himself a nice hole, rolled himself up in a ball, and slept all winter.

If you have enjoyed this story, you may like to read *Told by Uncle Remus* by Joel Chandler Harris.

Ask your teacher to read you some of Uncle Remus's tales.

## SOMETHING TO WRITE

Write all the true statements.

1. None of the animals liked Brother Bear.
2. He played tricks on the small and weak animals.
3. The animals said nothing should be done about Brother Bear's conduct.
4. Brother Fox said Brother Bear was too rough.
5. Rabbit had a good plan to get rid of Brother Bear.
6. The animals shut Brother Bear up in a hollow tree.
7. He slept all winter.



The Lullaby



## A NEGRO FOLK RHYME

In the evening the Negro nurses sang lullabies to the master's children, told them original stories, or made up rhymes for them. They enjoyed this rhyme.

### THE COW

"Did you feed my cow?"

"Yes, M'am!"

"Will you tell me how?"

"Yes, M'am!"

"Oh, what did you give her?"

"Corn and hay."

"Oh, what did you give her?"

"Corn and hay."

"Did you milk her good?"

"Yes, M'am!"

"Did you do like you should?"

"Yes, M'am!"

"Oh, how did you milk her?"

"Swish! swish! swish!"

"Oh, how did you milk her?"

"Swish! swish! swish!"



## A DAY WITH THE FIELD HANDS

The plantation was an interesting place from early in the morning until late at night. All day long the slaves were working—working—working.

The field hands sang as they labored in the fields. They made up or composed songs about their work, just as they made up stories to tell their children in the evening. It seemed that the singing of a song made their burdens lighter.

In the evening they returned to their cabins with their hoes on their shoulders and a song on their lips.

After supper they were free to enjoy themselves. What happy times they had! Sometimes they would gather in one cabin to have a party. One would play the fiddle or banjo while the others danced and sang. Then they played all sorts of games in which young and old took part.

On rainy days they could not work in the fields, so some of them stayed in their cabins and did the little things that should be done in their homes.

The women mended the clothes for the family, and the men tried to make the cabins more comfortable. Often they had to make their own furniture.

Some men used the rainy days to go fishing. The mother and children were always happy when this happened, because they knew they would have fresh fish for supper. The

slaves were allowed very little meat except bacon or salt pork, so they always welcomed a change of diet.

Rainy days did not always bring rest for the slaves, for there was such indoor work as preparing cotton, corn, and tobacco to be sold; but bad weather brought a change from the hard work in the fields, and the slaves were always happy when it rained.

When their daily work was done, the slaves did not always have to stay on the plantation. If they had a kind master, they were often allowed to go with him on hunts for fox, opossum or coon. After returning from these exciting pleasures, they enjoyed an opossum or coon feast.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

A famous Negro poet, Paul Laurence Dunbar, wrote many beautiful poems about life on the plantations. Ask your teacher to read you

A Cabin Tale  
Little Brown Baby  
The Party  
Lullaby  
Time to Tinker 'Roun'

## CHAPTER XVI

### NEGRO SONGS AND SPIRITUALS

All the peoples on the earth have helped to make our world a better place in which to live. Some historians say the African Negro taught the world trial by jury, the domestication of the sheep, goat, and cow, the use of stringed musical instruments, and the use of iron.

We know the American Negro gave the world the priceless gift of Negro music in story and song. Wherever these songs are sung, they touch the heart of the people who hear them, because they came from the heart of the people who gave them birth.

Let me tell you something about them.

Spirituals are songs which the Negro slaves made up about their religious and everyday experiences. There are also work songs of the fields and rivers, dance, play and rhythm songs.

You remember that when Negroes were in Africa, they sang of many things. Their songs in America gave voice to the most important experiences of their lives, their joys, sorrows, and hopes. Many of them were composed in their secret meetings.

When they came to America, many continued to hold

these secret meetings, but others were permitted to hold meetings for religious purposes during which there was singing. These songs made up in America are the gifts of the Negro to his America.

Late at night after the master and his family had gone to bed, many slaves would "steal away" to a secret place in the woods or to a secluded cabin. Here they expressed their feelings about their condition. They sang about the happenings of the day and their plans for the future.

Some of these songs were made up while the slaves labored in the fields. Others were originated by Negro nurses as they sang to sleep the little children. Some were composed by Negro ministers who preached at the camp meetings.

These songs were about the hard work on the plantation, the cruelty of some masters, the longing of the slave to be free to go back to his home in Africa or heaven; and sometimes they were about an amusing incident that happened to one of them.

Corn songs were composed whenever there was a husking bee. This was a friendly gathering of all the slaves from one or several large plantations for the purpose of husking corn.

The corn was piled high in huge mounds like a haystack, and the slaves shucked it by the moonlight or by the light of large campfires.

One person who had a beautiful voice climbed on top of

the pile and began to sing. His song was about the corn husking season. Others joined in the chorus or added another verse.

In this way a spiritual was born.

After the slaves were set free and some owned their own farms, they sang also about their wares when they went to town on market days. Here are the words to one of these songs.

Corn! Corn! Sweet corn!  
Sweet corn! Fine Irish potatoes!  
Cabbage! Onions! Beans!  
Beans! String beans!  
String beans! Fine Irish potatoes!  
Cabbage! Onions! Peas!  
Peas! Sweet peas!  
Sweet peas! Fine Irish potatoes!  
Cabbage! Onions! etc.

One of the best loved spirituals is "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." It tells of the longing of a slave to be carried back to his home in Africa or to his heavenly home. The chariot referred to, was a French sledlike vehicle used to transport tobacco in North and South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. The slave wanted a chariot to swing out of the skies to take him to a happier home.

## TOOT TOOT SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

Refrain:

Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Coming for to carry me home;  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Coming for to carry me home.

1. If you get there before I do;  
Coming for to carry me home,  
Tell all my friends, I'm coming too,  
Coming for to carry me home.
2. I looked over Jordan and what did I see,  
Coming for to carry me home?  
A band of angels coming after me,  
Coming for to carry me home.

If it were possible for us to collect all the songs and spirituals sung by the slaves, we would have a history of the music of the Negro in America. The spirituals tell a true story, and his songs describe his history when he was in Africa and in America.

Some historians believe that many slaves would have died, if they had not had their comforting songs in the evening by the moonlight.

SOMETHING TO DO

Would you like to hear some of these spirituals sung just as the slaves sang them?



Listen to Folkways Record F. P. 38 Spirituals.

Write the following sentences filling the blanks with the correct word.

1. The African Negro gave the world the use of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The American Negro gave the world Negro \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Spirituals were made from the Negro slave's everyday \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Some spirituals were composed while the slaves worked in the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Negro \_\_\_\_\_ made up songs for the little children.
6. A bee is a friendly gathering of people to \_\_\_\_\_ for some one.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ made up spirituals at the camp meetings.
8. Negroes held \_\_\_\_\_ meetings in Africa and America.
9. The slaves longed for their \_\_\_\_\_ in Africa.
10. Negro spirituals tell the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Negro in America.
11. People all over the world \_\_\_\_\_ Negro spirituals.
12. Some spirituals were about \_\_\_\_\_ incidents.
13. Other spirituals were about the hard work on the \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Many slaves might have \_\_\_\_\_ if they had not had their songs.

fields

died

iron

work

spirituals

secret

history

enjoy

home

nurses

experiences

ministers

amusing

plantation

## CHAPTER XVII

### PAUL CUFFE

At no time in the history of our country were all Negroes held as slaves. Those who were brought here as bond servants became free after they served their term of years. Although it was difficult, it was always possible for a few slaves to become free.

Some Negroes were never slaves. In 1830 as many as 3,777 had become slave holders themselves.

Free Negroes had a hard time. They were not wanted in slave states because the slaves might try to be free also. In free states they were not wanted because they did work others desired to do. However, some free Negroes became prosperous and occupied useful positions.

Paul Cuffe was one of this class. When he was a child, he lived with his family on an island off the coast of Massachusetts. The island was nine miles from the coast. Paul's house was the only one on the island. Every day he watched the ships pass by. Sometimes the sailors would stop at his home and tell exciting tales of the sea. Some of these men were whalers. They sailed up and down the coast in search of these mighty sea animals. Paul listened to all their tales and thought how he would like to be a sailor.



Paul Cuffe at Sea

"When I grow up, I want to be a whale-fisher," he said to his father one day. "I want to be the captain of a large ship of my own and have many sailors to sail with me."

Paul's father encouraged him in every way, but he could not send him to school because there was no school near them. Paul learned to read and write as best he could. Sometimes he had a tutor to teach him. He studied arithmetic and navigation because he wanted to learn to sail a ship.

When Paul was sixteen years old, he began the life of a sailor. First he went on a whaling voyage as a common seaman. Then he made several other trips. He worked on the ships and learned all he could about them. Finally he decided to build a boat of his own. He wanted to make his living by trading with the people on the coast of our country.

Paul's brother, David, helped him to build his first boat. When it was finished, the two brothers went to sea to trade with the people of Connecticut. Before they had gone far, they were caught in a terrible storm and the wind and waves almost upset the boat. After the storm they saw a pirate ship coming toward them. David was so afraid that he would go no farther, so they had to return home.

After this Paul had on the sea many exciting adventures. Once he made a boat by himself. In it he started to see his brother who now lived on an island near him. On the way to his brother's home, the pirates seized him and his vessel. He was lucky to reach home alive.

Now he had no boat, but he would not give up. He

asked his brother again if he would help him build another vessel, and David agreed. After this boat was finished, Paul borrowed some money, bought some goods, and started out to sea again. On the way he was chased by pirates, and his boat was damaged when it struck a rock; so he had to return home to repair it. With a large cargo, he went to sea a second time, but pirates took all his goods away from him and beat him besides. In those days there was no way to punish the large number of persons who roamed over the sea to rob others. These robbers depended on this sort of stealing to make a living.

Still Paul was not discouraged. He bought another cargo and went on a third voyage. This time he sold his goods for a large sum of money. This made him very happy. He bought more goods and continued to trade with the people on the coast. On almost every trip he made over a thousand dollars.

With some of his money he built a large schooner called the "Mary." Now he was the captain of a large ship. In the "Mary" he went with ten sailors on a whaling voyage. They captured six whales and Captain Cuffe killed two of these himself.

He sold the whale oil and bone and received enough money to buy another boat which he called the "Ranger." With this ship he traded with the people of Virginia. The first time he landed on the coast, the people were surprised because they had never seen a ship with a Negro Captain and



all Negro sailors. After they became acquainted with Captain Cuffe, they visited his vessel; and one of them invited him to dine with his family.

All the rest of Captain Cuffe's life was very successful. When he was twenty-five years old, he married a beautiful Indian girl, and they had a family of eight children; two boys and six girls. The captain bought a \$3500 farm on which they lived. When he bought his farm there was no school in the neighborhood and no teacher to teach his children. He wanted his sons and daughters to be educated, so he called his neighbors together to see if they would help him build a school. They could not agree on the plans at this meeting, so Captain Cuffe built a school house on his farm. He paid for it with his own money and paid part of the teacher's salary also. All the colored and Indian children in the neighborhood attended this school.

Captain Cuffe became a very rich man, and he used his money to help those who were less fortunate than he. He wanted to do all he could for the Negroes in Africa and America. He thought that all the free Negroes should return to Africa. He believed they would be better off there and could teach the others how to live more useful lives.

After some time he found thirty-eight free Negroes who wanted to go to Africa. Only eight of these could pay their own expenses, but the Captain took all of them on his ship, the "Traveller," and at his expense carried them to Africa. When he left Africa, he went to England to visit some



friends of the Negro. While there he was encouraged to continue his work, and he returned to America very happy. He hoped to take many more free Negroes to Africa, but before he could do so, he became very ill and died at the age of fifty-nine.

At the time of his death, there were two thousand colored people waiting for him to take them to Africa.

Captain Cuffe was buried in Westport, Massachusetts. One hundred years after his death, a great-grandson, Horatio P. Howard, erected a monument to his memory. Every year many people visit his tomb.

#### SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

If you wish to know about other noted Negroes who lived during Paul Cuffe's time, ask your teacher to tell you about Lemuel Haynes, Andrew Bryan, Richard Allen, James Varick, Absalom Jones, Lott Cary, Nat Turner, Christopher Rush, James Forten, and others.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Were all the Negroes in this country slaves at some time?
2. Did any Negroes ever become slaveholders?
3. Why did free Negroes have a hard time?
4. Where did Paul Cuffe live?
5. Why did he want to be a sailor?
6. What thrilling experiences did he have with pirates?
7. How did he become a rich man?
8. Why did he build a school house on his farm?

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9. Who attended this school?
10. How did Paul Cuffe use his money?
11. Why did he think all free Negroes should return to Africa?
12. How did he help them to return?
13. Who erected a monument to Paul Cuffe's memory?
14. Where is this monument?

## CHAPTER XVIII

### IRA ALDRIDGE

#### A Famous Negro Actor

Did you ever take part in a play at school? It is great fun to imagine you are some one else, dressing the way that person dressed, doing the things that person did, and saying the things that person said. Whenever you do this you are an actor.

There are many famous Negro actors. Some play in motion pictures and others on the stage. Some of them have taken the most important parts in plays. Would you like to know the story of one of the greatest actors of his time? His name was Ira Aldridge. He played his parts so well that he has been called one of the most famous actors of all time.

Ira Aldridge's father was the son of an African prince. He was a very proud and intelligent man, and he came to our country to study so that he might go back to Africa to teach his people. Although he came to America when most Negroes were slaves, he was always a free man.

Ira was born in New York City. He was a very bright child, and his father wanted to give him the best education he could afford. When he was a small boy, he worked with a ship carpenter. Then his father sent him to elementary and high school and later to Schenectady College. There he



Ira Aldridge

studied diligently, but he was not permitted to do many things he wanted to do. Often he wished he could take part in the plays given at school, but he was not chosen for any of the parts.

When his father realized that because of his color his son could not make much progress in this country, he took him to England. While there Ira entered the University of Glasgow in Scotland and completed his education. At this college he won many honors, one of which was a medal for Latin composition.

During all of his college life he enjoyed acting more than anything else. He took part in many of the plays given at the University, and for his acting he was always highly praised. He played his parts so well that he made the audience believe he was really the person whose part he was playing.

One day a famous actor, Edmund Kean, saw him in a play.

"Here is a great actor," he said to himself; and he asked Aldridge if he would take part in a play with him.

Aldridge was delighted. He played with Mr. Kean in one of Shakespeare's most famous plays, "Othello." Aldridge took the part of Othello, and he made a most favorable impression.

He travelled all over England; then he went to the European continent, visiting all the great cities there. The people were delighted with this great Negro actor. Kings and queens gave receptions for him, and he was showered with



beautiful gifts and awards.

The King of Prussia gave him a gold medal. The Emperor of Austria honored him with the Grand Cross of the Order of Leopold, and the city of Berne gave him a Maltese Cross with the Medal of Merit.

Never had a Negro actor been so honored by the people. He was a welcome guest in the homes of the most cultured and wealthy people of Europe. He himself became wealthy and bought a beautiful palace near London.

With all his good fortune he never lost interest in his people and he helped them whenever he could. When he died in Lodz, Poland, in 1867, all America and Europe mourned his death.

#### THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

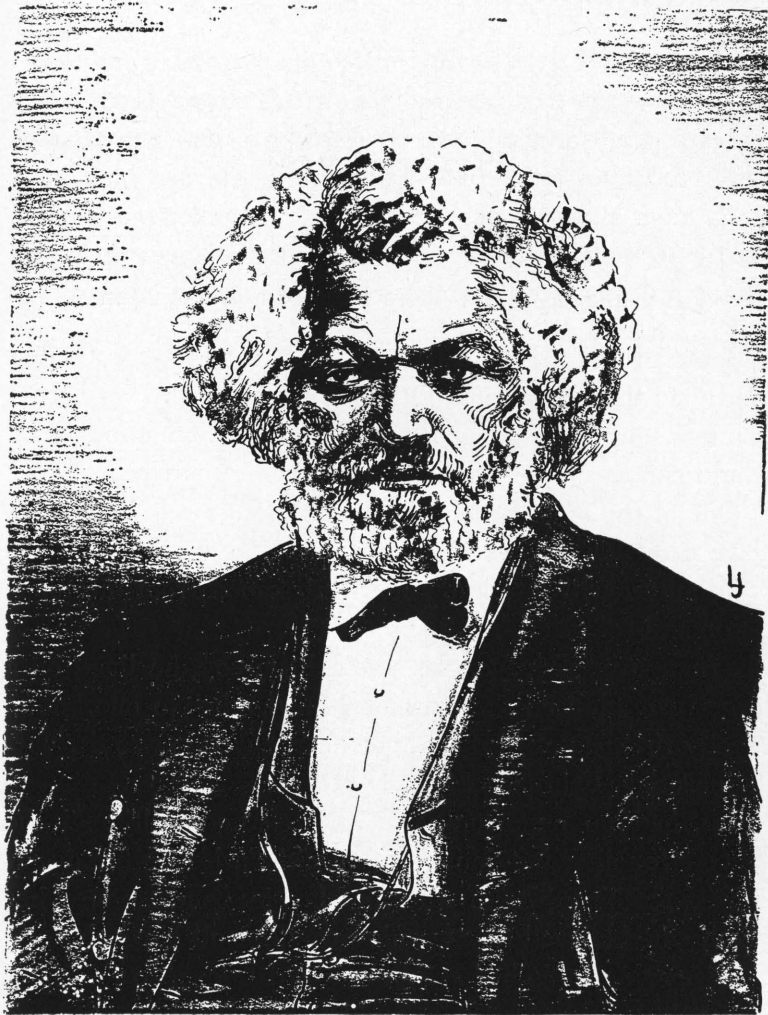
Many Negroes have distinguished themselves as actors and actresses. Find out all you can about Hattie McDaniel, Canada Lee, Richard B. Harrison, Dorothy Dandridge and others. Tell the class about them.

#### SOMETHING TO WRITE

Write the sentences that are true.

1. Ira Aldridge's father was the son of an African prince.
2. He wanted his son to have the best education he could afford.
3. Ira Aldridge did not make much progress in this country because of his color.
4. His father took him to Spain.
5. Ira Aldridge took part in the plays given at the University of Glasgow.
6. Kings and Queens honored him for his excellent acting.





Frederick Douglass

## CHAPTER XIX

### FREDERICK DOUGLASS

#### A Runaway Slave Who Became a Great Man

Some of the slaves had kind masters and were treated kindly on the plantations. Others were owned by very cruel planters, and they longed for freedom. Sometimes they would run away up North where they became free.

One of the most famous American orators was a runaway slave named Frederick Douglass.

Would you like to know how he escaped from the plantation and became a free man?

When Frederick Douglas was a little boy, he lived on a large plantation on the coast of Maryland. No one knows exactly the date of his birth, but he believed it was St. Valentine's day, February 14, in 1817.

He had no opportunity to go to school, although he longed for an education. One day the wife of his owner started teaching him to read, but her husband stopped her because he believed that learning would spoil Frederick.

Many times this little boy would steal down to the shore to watch the big ships come in. How he wished that he were a sailor so that he could sail the seas on one of these beautiful ships!

He noticed that some of the sailors were Negroes; so he made friends with them. He learned that they were free men. Some had worked hard and bought their freedom from kind masters. Others had come from countries which did not have slaves. All of them carried with them some very important papers. These papers showed they were free. Any colored person who had these free papers could go anywhere in our country without fear of being arrested. You remember that Paul Cuffe could do so.

Sometimes a free Negro would lend his papers to a slave so that he could escape. When the slave was safe up North, he would send back to his friend these papers. This was a very dangerous thing to do. Suppose the slave lost the papers? Suppose some one found out the papers did not belong to him? The free man would have been sent to prison, and the slave would have been returned to his master and given a whipping.

Little Frederick learned all these things from one of the sailors who became his friend. This sailor often took him on his ship and told him all about a sailor's life. Frederick learned the name of every part of the ship. He knew the use of every part. By the time he was a young man, you would have thought he was a sailor if you had heard him talk.

#### THE ESCAPE

One day Frederick's friend told him he would help him to escape. He gave him his free papers and told him to re-

turn them by mail after he had reached the North. How happy he was!

"I am going to be free!" he said. "I am going to be free"!

He dressed himself like a sailor, packed his few clothes, and stole away from the plantation. He did not go to the station to buy his ticket because he thought some one would know him. He jumped on the train after it had left the station, and crept into the coach where only colored people rode.

How frightened he was! "Suppose some one who knows me is in this coach," he thought. He was almost afraid to look around. After a while the conductor came in. He asked every one to show his free papers. All the people did so except Frederick. When the conductor came to him, he said, "Let me see your free papers!"

Frederick told him he always left his free papers at home because he was afraid they would be lost at sea.

"Then what have you to prove that you are free?" the conductor asked.

"I have a paper with an eagle stamped on it. It will carry me anywhere I want to go."

He pulled the sailor's papers out of his pocket; and when the conductor saw the eagle, he was satisfied. He took Frederick's fare and went away.

After many anxious hours Frederick reached the North. He soon found work to do. With some of his money he bought books. During his leisure time, he studied very hard,

and finally he became a great orator. He spoke to large crowds of people telling them why all the slaves should be free. He even went across the ocean to England and spoke against slavery.

During these years he was also editing a newspaper. In it he printed many articles to show why his people should be free. At first he called his paper *The North Star*. Then he changed the name to *Frederick Douglass's Paper*. The war between the North and South followed, and the Negroes came out of bondage.

How happy Douglas was when all the slaves were finally freed! Then he and all ambitious Negroes could serve their country in many ways. Once he was the Marshall of the District of Columbia. He became the United States Minister to Haiti, and after that he was Recorder of Deeds in Washington. He often visited colored schools and spoke to the children, telling them about his life and how to make the most of theirs. Here is a story that he told the pupils of a school in Talbot County, Maryland, where he was born:

"I once knew a little colored boy whose father and mother died when he was six years old. He was a slave, and had no one to care for him. He slept on a dirt floor in a hovel and in cold weather would crawl into a meal bag, headforemost, and leave his feet in the ashes to keep them warm. Often he would roast an ear of corn and eat it to satisfy his hunger, and many times he crawled into the barn or stable and secured eggs, which he would roast in the fire and eat.



"This boy did not wear pants as you do, only a tow linen shirt. Schools were unknown to him, and he learned to spell from an old Webster's *Spelling Book*, and to read and write from posters on cellars and barn doors, while boys and men would help him. He would then preach and speak, and soon became well known. He finally held several high positions, and accumulated some wealth. He wore broadcloth and did not have to divide crumbs with the dogs under the table. That boy was Frederick Douglass.

"What was possible for me is possible for you. Do not think because you are colored you cannot accomplish anything. Strive earnestly to add to your knowledge. So long as you remain in ignorance, so long will you fail to command the respect of your fellow men."

#### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How did Frederick Douglass show his love for his people?
2. What good advice did he give the pupils of the schools he visited?

Frederick Douglass's home, Cedar Hill, Washington, D. C., is open to the public. If you ever visit Washington, you will enjoy seeing it.

At Rochester, New York, is a large statue of Frederick Douglass. You will want to see it if you ever visit that city. In Boston is a square named for this great man. Many schools and other institutions bear his name.

If you have enjoyed the story of Frederick Douglass, you



might want to know about a slave woman, Sojourner Truth, who became a great orator and made many sacrifices for her people.

Another Negro woman, Harriet Tubman, helped more than 300 slaves to escape to the North and become free men. You will enjoy reading her story in *Our Negro Brother* by Edith H. Mayer and *Famous American Negroes* by Langston Hughes.

## CHAPTER XX

### EMANCIPATION DAY

Every year the people of our country celebrate Emancipation Day. Emancipation means "setting free," and Emancipation Day is the day the slaves were set free.

Nearly two-thirds of the Negroes were held in slavery until war broke out between the North and South in 1861. For a long time one section had quarrelled with the other about slavery.

The South said to the North, "You have nothing to do with this. It is our affair."

The North said, "The country should not let slavery go to the new states," while Abraham Lincoln said, "This country cannot endure half slave and half free."

Then the North and the South went to war, because the one could not agree with the other.

Robert E. Lee and his generals led the southern armies. Ulysses S. Grant and other generals led the northern armies.

Great battles were fought at Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and elsewhere.

The large armies under Lee and his generals weakened under the fire of much larger armies led by Ulysses S. Grant and his generals; and the war ended with the surrender of

General Lee on April 9, 1865. These victories made emancipation possible.

The first Emancipation Day was one of great rejoicing. The masters of some plantations called all the slaves to the "Big House." Then they stood on the veranda and read to them an important paper. This paper was the "Emancipation Proclamation." It was written by President Abraham Lincoln and it said all slaves must be free.

How happy the people were! They were no longer slaves but free men! They no longer had to work without pay. They could do the work they wanted to do and go where they wanted to go.

But what did they want to do, and where could they go? Most of them had no money; some had no education; many could neither read nor write; many could not count.

Some of them stayed on the plantations and received wages for their work.

Most of them wanted an education. They wanted to learn to read and to count their money. They wanted to learn to write their names and to write letters to their friends who went up North. They wanted to learn to read the *Bible*.

There was no one to teach them, so they began to teach themselves.

The *Bible* became the text book. Those who could read a little taught the others to read. Those who could write a little taught the others to write. Those who knew a little about numbers taught the others to count.

At night mothers, fathers, and children sometimes studied together by a fire in the woods. Sometimes the men would fasten their primers between their plow handles so that they could read as they plowed. Some of them arose before day and studied in their cabins by the light of burning pine knots.

They were so eager to learn that friendly people began to open schools for them. These schools were called mission schools because they were built by the missionary societies.

All the pupils who went to these schools had to pay. There were no public schools for colored people. So you see that not all those who wanted an education could obtain it. Many of them could not afford to go to school.

Some years later, however, some public schools were built for colored children, and the Negroes themselves as law-makers united to establish these schools. Since that day the states have opened colleges for Negroes, and rich people have assisted in this effort. Now all who really want an education can get it.

## CHAPTER XXI

### A SLAVE BOY'S STRUGGLE FOR AN EDUCATION

Booker T. Washington

Many Negro slaves became great men and women after they were set free. Here is the story of a little boy who became one of the greatest men of our country. He attended one of the mission schools, Hampton Institute. He was so poor that he had to work his way through school; but he studied diligently and became a famous teacher.

Booker T. Washington began his life as a little slave boy on a large plantation in Virginia. No one remembered the day he was born, but he thought it was April 18, 1856.

His home was a log cabin of only one room. There were no glass windows in this cabin. The light came in through square holes cut in the walls. There was no floor except the hard, cold earth.

At one end of the cabin was a large stone fireplace with many iron pots, kettles, and skillets hanging beside it. Here the food was cooked for all the slaves on the plantation. Booker's mother was the cook.

There was not much furniture in this hut. They had a rough board table, two large wooden benches, and a few pallets of straw and rags where the family slept at night.



Booker T. Washington



Booker's mother was a very good woman. Often he would wake up in the middle of the night and find her on her knees in prayer. She always prayed that the slaves might have freedom. She had heard that Abraham Lincoln was going to set free all the slaves, and she prayed for that time to come.

One day she called all her children and told them that the master wanted all the slaves to come to the "Big House." She did not know why; but she took them by the hand and up to the mansion they went. There were all the slaves from the plantation. They were standing around in groups, watching and waiting.

The master came out with a paper in his hand. He read it with a trembling voice. It said all slaves were free. Every one was so happy he wept. It seemed as if heaven were on earth.

Booker's mother bent over him and whispered in his ear, "Son, your mother's prayers have been answered." She took her children back to the cabin, and they tried to decide what to do. They had no money, so there was nothing for them to do but stay on the plantation and work for wages.

#### FINDING A NEW HOME

In a few days Booker's stepfather came to take them away from the plantation. They had not seen him for several years, because he had been sold and sent away. Now he was back with them, and they were very happy. He told them

that he was going to take them to West Virginia where colored men were hired to work in the salt mines and were paid wages in real money.

For months and months this little family traveled. They were a queer sight as they trudged along the road with all their belongings in bundles on their backs. Sometimes the weather was pleasant, and they slept out of doors. Sometimes it rained, and they had to find shelter in a barn or shed. Most of their food was corn pone-cakes that the mother made and cooked in the ashes of the camp fire. The colored people on the way helped them all they could. They gave them more cornmeal, bacon, and other food.

Finally they reached the little village of Malden, West Virginia. Here Booker's stepfather found a job for himself and one for Booker in the salt mine.

The owner of the mine started a night school for his helpers so that they could learn to read, write, and count. Booker wanted to go to school very much. He wanted an education so that he could be a teacher and help his race. But he had to work in the mines until nine o'clock at night. The night school began at nine o'clock and it was two miles away. Booker did not care. When his work was finished, he ran most of the way to school. He did not hear all the lessons, but he learned what he could.

One night he was very, very sleepy and tired. While he was sitting on a bench he fell fast asleep and over on the floor

he went. Every one in the class laughed, and he was embarrassed.

The next day he tried to find other work to do. He knew that he could not get his school work if he had to work so late at night.

#### NEW WORK

Some one told him that Mrs. Ruffner wanted a boy to help her with her housework. Booker had heard of Mrs. Ruffner. Many colored boys had worked for her, but none of them liked her. One told Booker that she was too strict. He said he could not do anything to please her.

But Booker thought that he could please her, and when he asked for the job, she gave it to him. His wages were a dollar a week, and she promised to give him more if he did his work well. He learned that Mrs. Ruffner was a very careful housekeeper and she wanted her work done right. Her servants had to keep themselves clean and neat, and she made them do things promptly without talking back to her.

Booker pleased her in every way, and she helped him. When she learned that he liked to read, she lent him books.

One day he told her he had heard some men in the mines talking about a wonderful school in Virginia where colored people were taught to read, write, count, and to speak in public. He thought they said that poor students could work part of the time to pay for their board.

Mrs. Ruffner told him that this wonderful school was

Hampton Institute, and she promised to help him if he wanted to go.

How glad he was! He told his mother all about it, and she helped him to get ready for his journey.

Just before he left, Mrs. Ruffner gave him a pair of new shoes and many other things that he needed. She thought he had enough money to pay his fare to Hampton. He had been working for her a year, and she thought he had saved some of his money. She did not know that he had to help support the family.

#### THE JOURNEY TO HAMPTON

When Booker started out, he had only three dollars in his pocket. He paid this for a seat in a stage coach and rode all day long. When night came he had to get off. The driver told him he could not take him any farther unless he had more money. That night he slept in a barn, and the next day he started walking.

On and on he walked. He had five hundred miles to go before he reached Hampton. He did not want to wear out his new shoes, so he carried them. Finally he became so hungry that he tried to sell them for four dollars. Only one man offered to buy them. He gave Booker ten cents and told him he would give him the rest when they met again at Hampton. But Booker never saw the man again.

He walked and walked. He begged for rides in wagons that came by, and he spent one night out of doors walking about to keep warm.

## AT HAMPTON

At last young Booker reached Hampton, and it seemed to him the most wonderful place in the world. He stood before the big brick building with wide open eyes. Never in his life had he been happier.

He went inside, sat down and waited until the head teacher could see him. Finally she came in. She looked at him doubtfully. He was very thin because for some time he had not had proper food. He needed a bath and a change of clothing.

"Take this broom," she said, "and sweep that recitation room."

Booker smiled. He knew that he could please her because at Mrs. Ruffner's he had learned to clean a house perfectly. He took the broom and swept the room three times. Then with his dusting cloth he dusted everything four times. When he told the teacher he had finished his job, she came in, took out her handkerchief and rubbed it over the wood-work, table, and benches. She found no dust anywhere.

Then she smiled at him and said, "I guess you will do to enter this institution."

Booker T. Washington worked very hard at Hampton Institute. After he was graduated, he taught a while at Malden, his first home in West Virginia. Then he attended Wayland Seminary in Washington, D. C.

His great task came when Alabama asked Hampton to name some Negro teacher to start a school in that state.



Booker was sent to do this great work. This school became Tuskegee Institute. It grew until it became a little city in itself.

During his lifetime, Booker T. Washington received many honors including the degree of Master of Arts from Harvard University and that of Doctor of Laws from Dartmouth College.

After he passed away, his bust, designed by the talented Negro sculptor, Richmond Barthé, was placed in New York University's Hall of Fame.

He is buried on the campus at Tuskegee Institute.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Why did Booker T. Washington want an education?
2. What made it difficult for him to acquire it?
3. How did Mrs. Ruffner help him go to Hampton Institute?
4. How did his experience with Mrs. Ruffner help him enter Hampton?
5. Why did the teacher at Hampton look at him doubtfully?
6. When he swept the floor, what did she learn about him?
7. How did Booker T. Washington's education help him? How did it help others?
8. How can your education help others as well as you?



## CHAPTER XXII

### GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

#### World's Greatest Chemurgist

Chemurgists are scientists who make from waste materials things people need or can use. Some have made knitted suits from cottage cheese, lacquer from soy beans, paper from pine trees.

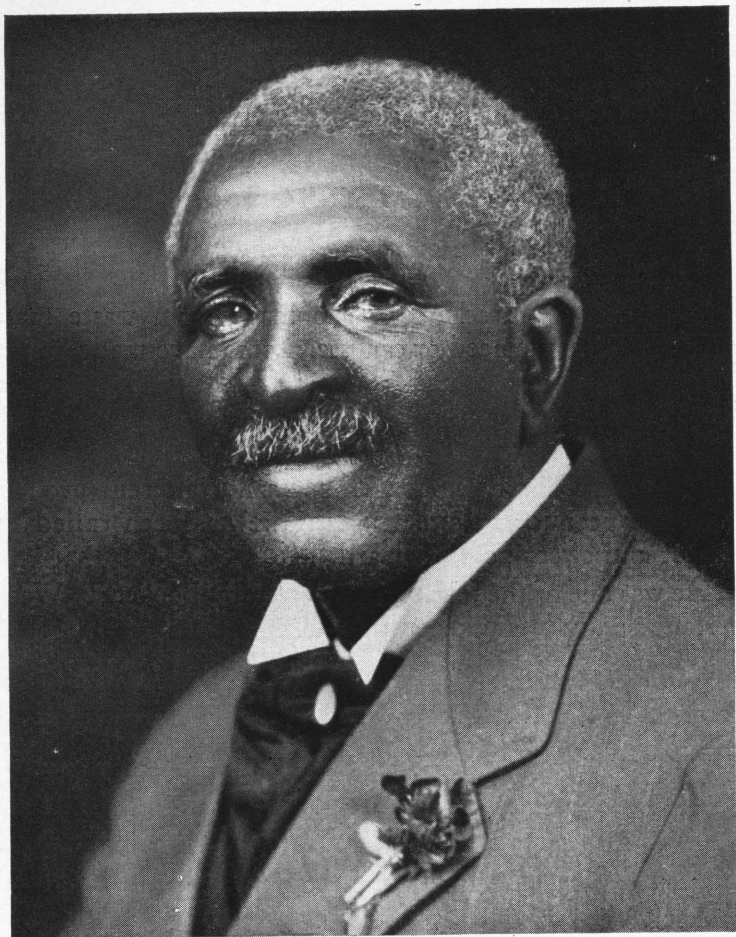
The world's greatest chemurgist was a Negro, George Washington Carver. He made so many different products from the peanut and sweet potato, he has been called the peanut and sweet potato wizard.

He was one of the teachers employed by Booker T. Washington to teach at Tuskegee Institute.

George Washington Carver was born a slave on the Moses Carver plantation near Diamond Grove, Missouri. The date was probably 1864 while war was being fought between the North and South.

During this terrible war, thieves rode the highways at night, plundering plantations and carrying off all valuable property.

One dark moonless night a band of these night-riders swooped down on the Moses Carver plantation, bound his slaves, and dragged them along the muddy road to Arkansas.



George Washington Carver

Among the captives was a mother and her frail six months old baby boy.

Moses Carver sent a neighbor to follow the thieves and offer them goods in return for his slaves. When the neighbor reached them, all the slaves except the baby had been sold and shipped away.

The raiders traded the child back to his former master in exchange for a race horse valued at three hundred dollars. When the baby was returned to the Carver home, he was ill with whooping cough through long exposure to the cold. He never fully recovered from this illness. For the rest of his life, he suffered from hoarseness and a wheezing voice.

Mrs. Carver, who had grown fond of the child of her Negro slave, gathered him in her arms and nursed him back to health. When the war was over and slavery no longer existed, the baby was adopted by the Carvers. They gave him their family name and, in addition, the name George Washington because of his truthfulness and honesty.

Always too frail to do heavy field work, he was used to help Mrs. Carver about the house. He got in the wood, tended the fires, and helped with the laundry. Mrs. Carver taught him to prepare meals, to bake and iron and sew.

When the day's work was done, he roamed in the woods around the farm. He loved the flowers, the birds, and the little animals. They were God's creatures, and he wanted to learn more about them.

He took home to study in his room armfuls of flowers and

other plants. He wondered about them. They held secrets about God's work. He longed to know those secrets. Often he fell asleep with a wildflower clasped in his little hand.

This curious child wanted to gain other knowledge also. He wanted to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic.

One day he found a copy of Webster's blue-backed speller, the only book in the Carver household. He mastered every word in it. That gave him a desire to further his education.

He learned that eight miles from the Carver farm, in Neosho, a school had been started for Negro children. With the Carver's consent, ten-year-old George tramped over the hills to attend his first school. Arriving in Neosho in the evening, penniless, he found a stable for his first night's lodging and slept in the company of the horses.

The next day he picked up odd jobs and earned enough to buy his food. Soon afterward he entered school.

One day a kind colored lady, Mariah Watkins, found him sitting on her wood pile picking seed from a sunflower. She took him in, giving him board and room for helping her about the house. She was a mother to the boy. She taught him to love God, and gave him a *Bible* which he read daily all his life.

Within a year he had learned all the Neosho school could teach him. He left on a mule train and went to Fort Scott, Kansas, more than sixty miles away, where he knew he could earn a high school education. After seven years he was graduated.

Now he wanted a college education. He sent a record of his schooling to Highland University in Olathe, Kansas, and was thrilled when they answered him stating he had been admitted as a student. He was sadly disappointed, however, when he appeared at the school and the president said, "I am sorry. We do not accept Negroes here."

Finally he learned that Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, accepted colored students. For two happy years he studied at this school. He learned more about plants. He studied music and art.

His art teacher took a special interest in him. When she learned of his great talent with plants, she wrote about him to her father who taught at Iowa State College at Ames. So it came about that he was admitted to this school to complete his education.

At first he had many unhappy experiences because he was a Negro. He was refused a room in a dormitory and was not permitted to eat in the dining room. However, he got a job as janitor of North Hall, and slept in one of the downstairs rooms.

Although he was forced to eat in the kitchen with the field hands, he got his meals free by serving as a waiter in the dining hall.

He studied hard and his talents for making things grow and understanding nature soon placed him high on the honor roll.

He continued to paint beautiful pictures of flowers and



other plants. Four of his paintings won prizes at the Iowa Exhibit of State Artists, and were exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

He was at the top of his class by graduation time, and his classmates chose him class poet.

After he was graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he stayed on two years longer and received a higher degree.

During these two years he taught at the college. He was no longer a servant. His knowledge of plants amazed both his students and the professors, and his fame spread throughout the country.

When Booker T. Washington heard of him, he offered him fifteen hundred dollars a year and his expenses to teach at Tuskegee Institute. This was a small salary, but the president of Tuskegee wanted teachers who were interested in teaching people, not in high salaries.

Carver knew this was an opportunity to serve his people, so he accepted the position and remained at Tuskegee Institute the rest of his life.

When he reached the campus, he found no well equipped laboratory in which to do his work. The students cleaned out an old building for this purpose. Then they searched the alleys and trash heaps for bottles, jars, bits of rubber and wire.

Carver made his own materials by hand. He turned old



ink bottles into Bunsen burners, stored his chemicals in tea-cups, and used a horseshoe for a bell to call his students to class. With this scant equipment, he started his great work for the farmers of the South.

He studied the clay on the countryside, and from it he made tints and stains with which the farmers painted the walls of their homes. He also made a powder to scour silver, and a dust to kill the Colorado beetle on white potatoes.

When the farmers' cotton crop failed because of the boll weevil, Carver suggested that they raise peanuts and sweet potatoes. This they did, but their crops were so plentiful they could not sell all of them: much was wasted.

In what other ways can we use peanuts and sweet potatoes?

That was the question for Carver and his students to answer. He studied his *Bible*. He arose at four o'clock every morning and walked in the woods asking over and over, "Mister Creator, why did you make the peanut?"

Returning to his laboratory, he worked to discover the answer. From the peanut he made more than 300 products including milk, butter, cheese, candy, coffee, pickles, soap, oils, shaving lotions, wood stains, dyes, linoleum, flour, breakfast foods, sauces, face powder, shampoo, printer's ink, and axle grease.

From the sweet potato came meal, starch, flour, vinegar, library paste, ginger, ink, shoe blacking, rubber compound, wood filler, molasses etc.—118 items.

Is it any wonder that Carver became known as the world's greatest chemurgist?

Many honors came to this great man. He was visited by the world's great and near great, including Presidents of the United States. Both Simpson College and the University of Rochester conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Science. The Catholic Conference of the South gave him the first of its annual awards for outstanding service to the welfare of the South. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People gave him the Spingarn Medal.

He was elected a member of the Royal Society of Arts in Great Britain.

One of his paintings hangs in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris.

His birthplace in Missouri is a national shrine.

Dr. Carver had no regard for money. Often he forgot to cash his salary checks. Many times he was offered a higher salary if he would leave Tuskegee Institute to go elsewhere. Thomas Edison, famous inventor, offered him over fifty thousand dollars a year to help him in his laboratory, but Dr. Carver refused it saying, "My work is among my people."

Shortly before his death, he gave his life's savings, over thirty thousand dollars, to the George Washington Carver Foundation to help promising Negro scientists.

Dr. Carver died at the age of 79 and was buried on the Campus of Tuskegee Institute.

## SOMETHING TO DO

Write the true statements.

1. Dr. Carver was born a slave on the Carver plantation.
2. He knew both his parents.
3. He was kidnapped when he was six months old.
4. His master gave him his name.
5. Dr. Carver did not like flowers and plants.
6. He did housework for Mrs. Carver.
7. He learned every word in Webster's blue-backed speller.
8. Dr. Carver did not teach at Iowa State College.
9. He taught at Tuskegee Institute.
10. He made 300 products from the peanut.
11. Many honors came to Dr. Carver.
12. He was the world's greatest chemurgist.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### DR. CHARLES HENRY TURNER

#### A Famous Negro Scientist

A scientist is a person who studies plants, animals, rocks, soils or other things to discover something new about them. He reads books to find out what others have learned about the things he wants to study. Then he tries to discover something unusual which no one else has known. If he succeeds, he may become famous.

Some American Negroes have become noted scientists. Dr. Charles Henry Turner was one of them. He learned so much about small animals that we was honored with high degrees at the Universities of Cincinnati and Chicago. He earned a Doctorate of Philosophy at Chicago.

Dr. Turner became famous because of the many new things he learned about the crawfish, the honey bee, the roach, the ant, and other insects. Some of the most interesting things he learned were about the ant. Would you like to know some of the things he found out about this tiny creature?

He learned that ants are very much like people in many ways. They live together in large nests or ant cities. These



Charles H. Turner



nests are made of sand or dirt. One city sometimes has in it more than a hundred little houses or rooms. Hallways lead from one of these rooms to the other. Inside the nests the ants are doing many wonderful things.

In one room lives the queen ant. She is a very interesting creature. She does not rule all the ants, but she is their mother. She lays all the eggs, and that is all the work she has to do. All the ants are kind to her. They feed her and take care of her.

Whenever the queen ant lays an egg, one of the ant nurses takes it to the nursery. In this room the eggs stay until they are hatched. The nurses take good care of these eggs. They lick them often to keep them clean. They see that they are never too hot or too cold, and they often move them from one part of the nursery to the other.

When the eggs are hatched, the nurses care for the babies. They bathe them three or four times a day. They do this by licking them all over with their tongues.

When these ant babies grow up, they have work to do in the nest. Some of them become little herdsmen. They take care of the ant "cows." These "cows" are really little bugs called aphids. They give off a sweet juice called honey dew and all ants are very fond of it.

In late autumn the herdsmen gather the eggs of the aphids and pile them in the nest. They take care of them all through the winter. When spring comes they take the eggs above the ground and scatter them about in the warm sunshine. At

night they are carried down again. When the eggs hatch, the ants carry the little bugs up into the sunlight and place them on weeds to suck sap.

It is very interesting to see the ants milk their "cows." They pat or rub them with their hairy feelers. This seems to tickle them and they squeeze out a little drop of honey dew.

The ant herdsmen take good care of their "cattle." They keep them in one of the underground rooms which might be called a stable.

Ants do many other things that people do. Some of them have slaves. They carry off the eggs and young of other ants and make them work for them. The slave ants keep the house clean, bring in the food, and sometimes care for the baby ants.

Ants are the favorite food of many animals, so they have many enemies. When they fight they bite and pull each other. Sometimes three or four of them will fight one large ant. Some will hold her while one saws off her head. They are fierce fighters, and would rather be cut to pieces than let go an enemy.

I cannot tell you all the interesting things that Dr. Turner learned about the ant. I am sure you will want to watch them more closely now; and always remember that a Negro scientist learned more about these little creatures than any one yet has learned. What Dr. Turner taught the world about the ant and other animals has been taken up by the great scientists of our time in studying human beings.

## SOMETHING TO DO

Did you ever hear of Dr. Ernest E. Just, the noted biologist at Howard University? He also was a famous Negro scientist. He liked to study the animals that live in the sea, and he learned many interesting things about them. Find out all you can about Dr. Just and his wonderful discoveries.

Write the sentences that tell what Dr. Turner learned about the ant.

1. Ants are very much like people.
2. They live together in large nests or ant cities.
3. They have a queen who is their mother.
4. The queen does not lay eggs.
5. She does the work for the other ants.
6. Ants have nurses, "cows," and herdsmen.
7. They do not have slaves.
8. Ants are fierce fighters.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

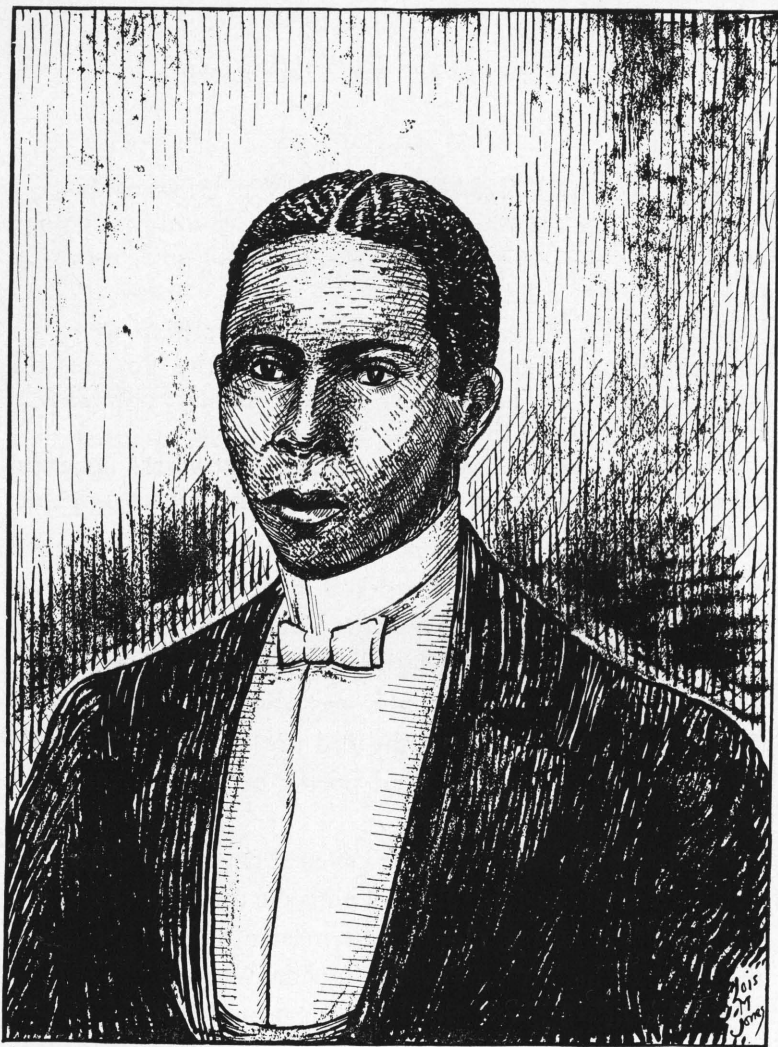
Do you like to read poetry? Some poets help us to see the beauty in common things: the trees, the flowers, the birds. Others help us to appreciate our family, our friends, and other people in the world.

Let me tell you the story of a Negro poet whose beautiful poems have helped many to understand and love his people.

Paul Laurence Dunbar's parents were slaves. His mother, who was Matilda Murphy, worked in the home of her master and was very kindly treated. Every evening when the master read to his wife, Matilda was allowed to sit on the floor at his knee to listen. She was always so interested in the stories and poems that she did not want to go to bed. She enjoyed hearing him read poetry because it seemed to sing songs to her.

One day all the slaves were given their freedom, so Matilda moved to Dayton, Ohio. There she met Joshua Dunbar who also had been a slave. His master had been so cruel that Joshua had run away to Canada where he was free. When he heard about the Emancipation Proclamation, he came to Dayton. Not long after they met, Matilda and Joshua were married.

Matilda could neither read nor write, but she was deter-



Paul Laurence Dunbar



mined to learn. Sometimes she would coax school children to come to her house to teach her the alphabet. She learned her letters quickly, and was soon reading sentences. How happy she was! Now she could read the *Bible* and the beautiful poetry she loved.

Joshua Dunbar was a plasterer. He was an old man when he married Matilda, and he could neither read nor write. He wanted to learn, however, so he taught himself.

After he had worked all day at his trade, he would come home and study his books.

He liked to read history and the lives of great men. So you see that Matilda and Joshua educated themselves after they were married.

When little Paul was born, his parents wondered what they should name him. His father said he thought his name should be Paul, because he had read in the *Bible* that Paul was a noble character. He said his boy would be a great man some day. Matilda agreed with him, so their son was named Paul Laurence Dunbar.

When Paul was four years old, his mother taught him to read; therefore, when he started to school, he was far ahead of the other pupils of his class. He enjoyed all of his school work, but he liked most of all reading, spelling, and language. Often the teacher would find him reading when other children were playing out of doors.

One day when he was reading at school, he came across a short poem by a great English poet. He thought he had

never read anything so beautiful, and he could think of nothing else.

On his way home that evening, he tried to put together words having a pleasing sound like the words in the poem. When he reached home, he wrote what was in his mind, and this was his first poem.

Paul Laurence Dunbar was only six years old when he wrote this little verse, and his mother was very proud of him. She encouraged him to continue his writing, and she kept all his poems in a large pasteboard box.

Whenever Paul was on a program at school or church, he wrote the poem that he recited. Every one praised his work and the teachers and students encouraged him to write more.

When he entered high school, he was the only colored pupil in his class. He wanted to show the other students that he was just as bright as they were so he studied diligently. The boys in his class admired him. They invited him to become a member of their literary club, and for a long time he was the president. When he was graduated, he composed the class song which was sung at the exercises.

While Paul was in high school, his father passed away, so he had to help support his mother. She tried to make a living doing laundry work. Every evening when Paul returned from school, he delivered the clothes his mother had washed.

When he finished high school, he looked for regular employment so that his mother would not have to do laundry

work. In a short time he found work as an elevator boy in the Callahan Building in Dayton. There he earned four dollars a week. With this he took care of his mother and himself.

Paul was never idle. Even while he was on the elevator, he was writing poems. He always kept beside him a dictionary, a tablet, a pencil, and a good magazine. He read a while, then he would write verses. Some of them were published in magazines and newspapers. They were read by thousands of people.

Paul was becoming a poet. Many people came to the Callahan Building and went up in the elevator just to see this Negro poet elevator boy.

One day when Paul came home from work, he said to his mother, "Where are the poems you have been saving for me? I have decided to put them together to make a book."

"How can you make a book, Paul?" she asked. "It takes a great deal of money to have a book published, and we have none."

"But I am determined to make this book," said Paul.

His mother gave him his papers. He took them to a printer who said he would publish the book. That was the happiest day of his life!

One afternoon a delivery boy came to the Callahan Building carrying a large heavy package. He went to the elevator and handed it to Paul.

"Here are your books," he said. Paul was so happy he did

not know what to do. In a very short time, he sold all the books and had enough money to pay for printing them.

After this Paul wrote several volumes of poems. He recited many of them to large audiences in our country and also in England.

When he gave his recitals, he became acquainted with many noted white people and made friends with them. One of his dearest white friends was William Dean Howells who told the people of the whole civilized world that Paul Laurence Dunbar was one of the greatest poets of his age.

Here is a poem he wrote for children.

#### THE SEEDLING

As a quiet little seedling  
Lay within its darksome bed,  
To itself it fell a-talking,  
And this is what it said:  
  
"I am not so very robust,  
But I'll do the best I can;"  
And the seedling from that moment  
Its work of life began.  
  
So it pushed a little leaflet  
Up into the light of day,  
To examine the surroundings  
And show the rest the way.

The leaflet liked the prospect,  
So it called its brother, Stem;  
Then two other leaflets heard it,  
And quickly followed them.

To be sure, the haste and hurry  
Made the seedling sweat and pant;  
But almost before it knew it,  
It found itself a plant.

The sunshine poured upon it,  
And the clouds they gave a shower;  
And the little plant kept growing  
Till it found itself a flower.

Little folks, be like the seedling,  
Always do the best you can;  
Every child must share life's labor  
Just as well as every man.

And the sun and showers will help you  
Through the lonesome, struggling hours  
Till you raise to light and beauty  
Virtue's fair, unfading flowers.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

Paul Laurence Dunbar's home in Dayton, Ohio, is a national shrine. People from all over our country visit it each year. If you are ever in Dayton, you will be a welcome guest there.



If you have enjoyed Dunbar's poems, you may want to read in the following books interesting poems by other Negro poets.

*The Dream Keeper* by Langston Hughes

*Gladiola Garden* by Effie Lee Newsom

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. How did Paul Laurence Dunbar's parents learn to read and write?
2. Why did they name him Paul?
3. How old was he when he wrote his first poem?
4. Why was Paul invited to become a member of the high school literary club?
5. How did he help his mother after his father passed away?
6. What did Paul do while running the elevator?
7. Why did his mother think he could not publish his book?
8. What was the happiest day of Paul's life?
9. Where did he recite his poems?
10. Who called him "one of the greatest poets of his age"?



Henry O. Tanner

## CHAPTER XXV

### HENRY OSSAWA TANNER

#### A Famous Negro Artist

You have read the story of a famous Negro teacher, a chemurgist, a scientist, a noted inventor, a great orator, a fearless sailor, and two talented poets. Would you like to know what some other Negroes have done to make our world a better place in which to live?

All of us like beautiful things. We enjoy seeing a beautiful sunset. We are happy when we hear beautiful music. We like to see and smell beautiful flowers, and it fills our hearts with joy to see the gorgeous colors in the rainbow.

Let me tell you about an artist who painted beautiful pictures for us to enjoy. His name was Henry Ossawa Tanner. His father was a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and he wanted his son to be a minister. He was very fond of his little boy, and together they often took walks in Fairmount Park not far from their home in Philadelphia. One day while they were taking their usual stroll, they saw an artist painting one of the beautiful scenes in the park.

"How I wish I were an artist!" said Henry to his father. "I think I should like to paint pictures more than anything else in the world!"

This was the first time that Bishop Tanner heard his son say he wanted to be an artist. The next day he bought him crayons, paints, a brush, and some drawing paper. He encouraged him in every way. When Henry went to school, his teachers praised his work, and they permitted him to enter a special class in art. After school hours he spent much of his time in art galleries in Philadelphia, studying the beautiful paintings there. Sometimes he took his modeling clay and went to the Zoological Park to model the animals.

When his school teachers had taught him all they knew about art, his father let him study with the famous artists of Philadelphia. He painted many beautiful pictures and sold them for several hundred dollars.

Although Henry's parents were very proud of him, they regretted that he had not become a minister. One day he said to his father, "I am going to teach the people about the Bible too. I cannot preach sermons as you can; but I can teach them by painting beautiful pictures of the stories in the Bible."

Henry learned that some of the most famous artists were in France, so he decided to go there for further study.

It was while he was in Paris that he became one of the world's great artists.

Most of his pictures are religious paintings. They are the pictures of the Bible stories he enjoyed hearing his father preach about.

The French people were very, very proud of Henry Tan-

ner. They bought for their homes and art galleries many of his pictures. One of his paintings, "The Raising of Lazarus," was purchased for the Luxembourg palace in Paris where famous kings and queens once made their homes. Only the world's best pictures are placed in this beautiful palace.

Many of Tanner's pictures are in our country where we may see them any time we wish. "The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah" is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. "Judas" is in the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh. "Nicodemus" is in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. "The Annunciation" is in the Memorial Building at Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, and one of his paintings is in the Art Institute in Chicago.

#### SOMETHING TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

Whenever you visit large art museums, ask to see the paintings of Negro artists.

Ask your teacher to tell you about other Negro artists and the exhibitions of their works by the Harmon Foundation in New York City.

Find out what you can about Aaron Douglass, Meta War-rick Fuller, Augusta Savage, Archibald J. Motley, William Edouard Scott, Richmond Barthé, and E. Simms Campbell.

Some of these artists are sculptors as well as painters.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### JAN E. MATZELIGER, NEGRO INVENTOR

Have you ever read the story about the elves and the shoemaker? You remember how hard the shoemaker had to work to make one pair of shoes, and how glad he was when the little elves helped him.

For many years shoes were made by hand just as this shoemaker made his. Then a very wise man made a machine that could sew together some parts of the shoe. This machine helped the shoemakers very much; but they still had to make by hand most of the shoes.

"What a fine thing it would be," they said, "if we had a machine that could make all of the shoe! Then in a day we could make more pairs of shoes. We would not have to work so hard, and people would not have to pay so much for their shoes."

But no one knew how to make such a machine. They worked and they worked, but they could not find a way.

Finally a young Negro boy made the machine that all the shoemakers needed. Would you like to know the story of his life?

This young man's name was Jan E. Matzeliger. He lived with his mother and father in Dutch Guiana in South Amer-



Jan E. Matzeliger

ica. Every day he worked in his father's machine shop. He liked to run machines.

One day he told his father he would like to go to America to seek his fortune. He had heard that many young men became rich if they went to America, worked hard, and saved their money. So his father gave his consent, and Jan came to our country.

He worked for a cobbler in Lynn, Massachusetts, where several other men were working. This cobbler had a machine that stitched the upper part of the shoes to the sole. Jan worked at this machine.

He watched the cobblers who had to work by hand. He felt sorry for them because their work was so hard, and they had to work so late.

One day he said to them, "I believe I can make a machine that can do what you are doing."

All of them laughed at him.

"Many great men have tried to do that," they said, "and it cannot be done."

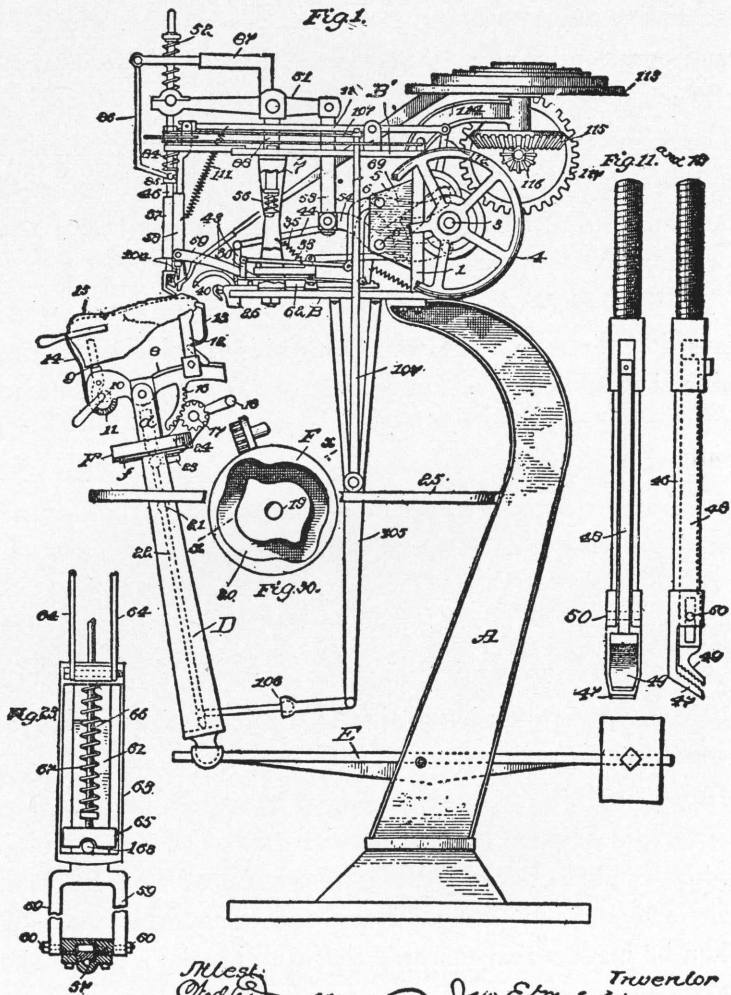
But Jan did not believe them. He rented a small room over an old Mission House, and there he worked every night on his machine. For eight long months he worked. He made a little model out of cigar boxes and other odds and ends. Then he made a real machine that could make a whole shoe by itself!

How happy he was! He had made something no one in

## LASTING MACHINE

No. 274,207.

PATENTED MAR. 20, 1883



Messrs.  
Hagland & Malden  
20 June

Inventor  
Law & Mageligen  
by Ellis Sparrow  
JHCU

AN ILLUSTRATION SHOWING THE MODELS MADE BY MATZELIGER TO ILLUSTRATE  
HIS INVENTIONS IN SHOE MACHINES.

the world had made before. That is why we call him an inventor.

Now let us see what his machine could do. It adjusted the sole. It arranged the leather over the sole. It drove in the nails. Then it took the shoe off the machine. It could drive 350 nails in one minute.

With the old machinery for making shoes, a large number of cobblers working very late could make only sixty pairs of shoes a day. But with Jan's machine the same number of men could make one thousand pairs in the same time.

Many shoe factories began to use Jan's machinery. A large company purchased it. They made more money and shoes became cheaper. Many people were made happy by the Matzeliger shoe making machine.

Now a firm of large factories owns Jan's machinery. It is called The United Shoe Machinery Company, and it makes the machinery for the largest shoe factories in the world.

#### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

There are many noted Negro inventors. Norbert Rillieux, of New Orleans, invented a pan for making granulated sugar.

Granville T. Woods liked to work with electricity, and he sold many of his inventions to the Westinghouse and General Electric companies.

Elijah McCoy invented devices for oiling machinery so that it would not burn up while running fast for a long time.

Ask your teacher to tell you about other Negro inventors.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### COLONEL CHARLES YOUNG

#### A Famous Negro Soldier

Some of the bravest soldiers of our country have been Negroes. They have fought in every war in which our country has taken part. Crispus Attucks was the first patriot killed in the Revolutionary War.

Because of their bravery and efficiency Negro soldiers have been promoted to high rank in the army. They have received the highest medals of honor.

Here is the story of a brave colonel who fought in the Spanish American War.

When Charles Young finished high school, he entered West Point Military Academy, a school where men are trained to become army officers.

For four years he studied at West Point, and when he was graduated, he became a lieutenant in the United States Army. He later had charge of a regiment of cavalrymen. These were soldiers who rode horseback. Colonel Young had more than a thousand officers and men under his command. He was very kind to his men, and they were always glad to obey him. One of his officers once said that he probably knew by name more than half his men. He visited them in their



Col. Charles Young

camp and saw that they were always comfortable.

Not long after Colonel Young became an army officer, our country went to war with Spain. We became very angry with the Spanish people because they sank one of our largest battleships, the *Maine*. Nearly three hundred American sailors were killed when this ship sank, so we had to fight for our protection. Many white and colored soldiers fought in this war, and some of the bravest deeds were done by colored troops.

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, a white officer, had charge of a regiment of white cavalry men. They were very brave soldiers, and Roosevelt called them his Rough Riders. One day they did a very daring deed. They rode to the top of a high hill to capture some Spaniards who were up there in a blockhouse.

When they reached the top of the hill, they found themselves in a trap. The Spanish sharpshooters were up in trees. They were firing with smokeless powder and were picking off the Rough-Riders one by one. Colonel Roosevelt's men could not see where the bullets were coming from, and they did not know what to do. On one side of them was a high barbed wire fence, and they could not drive their horses through that. On the other side was a high rocky cliff, and if they drove over it, both horse and rider would be dashed to pieces. For a while it looked as if all of Roosevelt's men would be killed. But suddenly they heard the sound of horses' hoofs. They looked down the hill and saw Colonel

Young's brave soldiers galloping up the hill to help them.

The Spaniards became frightened. "Here come those 'Smoked Yankees!' they shouted, and they ran for their lives. The colored soldiers fought bravely and saved Colonel Roosevelt and his men.

After the Spanish-American War, Colonel Young went to Liberia in West Africa to teach some of the Africans to be brave soldiers. While he was there he died of Blackwater fever, and all the people in our country mourned because such a brave man had passed away.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

Fill the blanks with the words below.

1. Colonel Charles Young was a famous .....
2. He went to school at .....
3. When he finished school he became an .....
4. He fought in the ..... war.
5. His soldiers were called ..... because they rode horses.
6. He had more than ..... officers and men under him.
7. He was ..... to his soldiers.
8. He knew many of them .....
9. One day Colonel Young and his men saved ..... and his men from being killed.
10. Colonel Young died .....

a thousand  
kind

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt  
West Point Military Academy  
Spanish-American

in Africa  
cavalrymen  
by name  
soldier  
army officer



Harry T. Burleigh



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### HARRY T. BURLEIGH

There are many famous Negro musicians. Some of them sing; some play the piano or organ; some play the violin; some play other musical instruments. Many of them compose music.

Let me tell you the story of one of the most noted Negro musicians. He was Harry T. Burleigh, a great singer and a famous composer.

When Harry T. Burleigh was a boy he lived in Erie, Pennsylvania. His father and mother worked for a family named Russell. Mr. and Mrs. Russell enjoyed beautiful music, and often they invited the great artists of the day to play in their drawing-room.

Harry's mother knew how much her son enjoyed music, so she always let him know when these musicians were to be at the Russell home. Harry would stand outside the drawing-room window and peep inside to see the artists and hear them play and sing.

One very cold, snowy night, a famous pianist, Rafael Joseffy, was invited to the Russell home. Harry had heard of him and wanted to see him. What do you think he did?

He stood out in the snow in front of the drawing-room

window for hours waiting for the musician to appear. He became so cold that he almost froze. The next day he was very ill, and when his mother learned that he had stood in the cold so long to hear a great musician, she asked Mrs. Russell if she would give him something to do in the house so that he could listen to her guests. After this when Mrs. Russell gave a musical, she let Harry open the door. In this way he became acquainted with some of the most famous musicians.

When he grew to be a young man, he sang in the churches and Jewish synagogues of Erie. He enjoyed this work very much, but he wanted to learn more about music. He wanted to go away to study, but his parents were too poor to send him. Finally some of his friends helped him to go to New York City. There he won a scholarship at the National Conservatory of Music. This scholarship paid for his musical training. He had to earn as best he could his board and room.

For a while he taught voice to a number of pupils. Then he trained Negro church choirs. Sometimes he received money for his singing. When summer came he worked in a hotel in Saratoga, New York. He did any kind of work in order to stay in school. He longed to sing in a church choir. He knew that many of the large white churches in New York had paid soloists in their choirs. How he wished he could be one! He knew no church that had a colored soloist, but he believed one might employ him.

One day he learned that a baritone soloist was needed at St. George's Episcopal Church, one of the wealthiest and most aristocratic white churches in New York. He immediately applied for the position. Fifty-nine white soloists wanted the position also; but in a few days Harry T. Burleigh was told that he had been chosen.

He sang in this choir for more than thirty years. When he had been with them twenty-five years, they presented him with a gift of a valuable watch.

Singing in St. George's Episcopal Church choir did not take all of Harry T. Burleigh's time. He was also a member of the choir at Temple Emanuel, the richest Jewish synagogue in our country. For twenty-five years he sang in this choir and at the end of that time the members of the synagogue gave him a beautiful gift.

This famous musician has given many recitals, singing before large crowds of people. Once he sang before the King of England who was thrilled with his beautiful voice.

We should remember Burleigh not only as a great singer but also as a famous composer. He loved the Negro spirituals and he wrote the music for many of them so that they would be just as beautiful when sung as solos as when sung by larger groups of singers. Some of his most popular spirituals are "Deep River," "O Didn't It Rain?" and "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

#### THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Would you like to know the stories of other great Negro

Musicians? Ask your teacher to tell you some of the interesting stories in *Negro Musicians and Their Music* by Maud Cuney-Hare. You will enjoy looking at the pictures in this book also.

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## CHAPTER XXIX

### MARY McLEOD BETHUNE

#### Mother of the Century

Women have played an important part in the history of the colored people in America. One of the most famous Negro women was Mary McLeod Bethune. She was noted for her devotion to her people and her love for the unfortunate peoples throughout the world.

As you read the story of her life, see if you can understand why she has been affectionately called the Mother of the Century.

Mary McLeod Bethune was born in a humble two-room cabin on a rice and cotton farm near Mayesville, South Carolina. She was one of a family of seventeen children, fourteen of them older than Mary.

The family was proud of their five-acre farm, for all had worked hard to purchase it.

Mary's parents and her fourteen older brothers and sisters had been slaves, toiling from sunup to sunset on the McLeod and Wilson plantations with no profit to themselves.

When Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proc-





Mary McLeod Bethune

lamation, and the war ended, Mary's family became free, and bought their land from one of their former masters.

Early every morning when it was just light enough to see, the family arose and prepared for the work of the day. Always there were prayers and hymns. Mary's great joy was in these moments when she talked to God. She thought of Him as a personal friend, and she believed He would answer her prayers.

Her heart was light and she was happy as she went to the field to pick cotton. When she was only nine, she could pick 250 pounds of cotton a day.

After the day's work, the family returned to the cabin for supper and rest. Before retiring all gathered before the living-room fireplace to enjoy singing and prayers.

Soon every one was tucked in bed — every one except Mother. After working in the fields all day, she washed and ironed the clothes for Ben Wilson, one of her former owners, who lived nearby. The family needed all the extra money they could earn.

Early the next morning, before going into the field, Mary and her mother delivered the laundry. When they walked up the narrow footpath to the rear entrance of the mansion, Mary heard Ben Wilson's golden haired granddaughters call to her from their playhouse.

"Come here, Mary. Do you want to play with our dolls?"

Mary entered the little house and gazed in amazement at

the toys, dishes, diminutive furniture, dolls and doll clothes. She walked about the room holding a magnificent doll.

Suddenly she saw lying on a table a beautiful picture book. She picked it up and started looking at it. One of the little girls rushed to her and snatched it from her hand shouting scornfully, "Put that down! You can't read!"

Mary never forgot those unkind words. They made her think and wonder.

"Maybe the difference between colored people and white people is just this matter of reading and writing."

As she walked back to the farm to do another day's work, she made up her mind that she would learn to read. All day long as she picked cotton she prayed, "Please, God, make a way for me to learn to read. I want to be educated."

A few days later, when the family came in from the field, they found a strange colored lady waiting for them.

"I am Miss Emma Wilson," she explained. "The Missionary Board of the Presbyterian Church sent me to Mayesville to open a school for Negro children. Will you let your children enter when the cotton picking is finished?"

"We can spare Mary now," said Mrs. McLeod. "She is the brightest and she wants to learn to read."

When Miss Wilson left, there was joy in the McLeod household. Mary was going to school.

For six years, day after day, Mary walked five miles to school and five miles home again. By that time, she had learned all she could at this small mission school; and she

used her education to help her family and the neighbors. They came to her to figure out the weight of their cotton, the price, and what would be each one's share. Mary became the favorite of the community.

One day Miss Wilson told her a kind white lady in Denver, Colorado, wanted to send a worthy colored girl to Scotia Seminary in Concord, North Carolina, to further her education. Mary was chosen for this honor.

Every one in the community helped her to go. Some neighbors knitted stockings, others gave her dresses and aprons. The whole community took her to the station and tearfully said goodbye.

At Scotia Seminary Mary studied diligently. She paid a part of her expenses by working in the kitchen and laundry, scrubbing floors and heaving wood and coal for the fires.

When she was graduated the Presbyterian Board gave her a scholarship to Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, so that she could study to be a missionary in Africa.

Here she met students from many foreign countries. They were one big family studying to make the world a better place in which to live. Their teacher, Dwight L. Moody, taught them love for all mankind, regardless of race, creed, class, or color; and they never forgot his teaching.

A part of their training was field service. They visited Chicago's slums and tried to bring those unfortunate people hope and cheer.

Mary joined the school chorus and received more musical

training. Every Thursday she visited the police station, sang to the prisoners, talked to them, and gave them literature. Her lunch hours were spent at the Pacific Garden Mission, where she served food to drunks and street people who were brought in.

She carried God's message to the sick, the sorrowing, and the discouraged. She sang to the blind and read them God's word.

All these experiences made her more determined to go to Africa as a missionary. When she was graduated from the Institute, she was greatly disappointed when she was told there were no missionary openings in Africa.

Determined to help her people, she decided to teach where her services were urgently needed. She started at Haines Institute in Augusta, Georgia. Then she taught in Sumter, South Carolina, in Savannah, Georgia, and Palatka, Florida.

At Savannah she met and married Alburtus Bethune, a fellow school teacher. In a few years he passed away, leaving her with a small son. She took her boy and went to Florida where many colored people were flocking to work on the new Flagler railroad.

Mrs. Bethune found her people living in ignorance and poverty. Here was her opportunity to serve them.

She settled in Daytona Beach, and with only \$1.50 in her pocket, she started a school which was the beginning of Bethune-Cookman College.



The first building was a shabby four-room cottage she borrowed from the owner promising to pay some rent if she could. Her first class was five little girls and her own son.

They burned logs and used the charred splinters for pencils, and crushed elderberries for ink. They haunted the city dump and trash piles behind hotels, picking up broken chairs, cracked dishes, discarded linen, and pieces of old lumber. All these were scoured, mended, and used.

As the enrollment increased, Mrs. Bethune trained a group of singers to entertain the guests at the large hotels in Daytona Beach. In this way wealthy tourists from many sections of the country became interested in the school. They gave generous gifts to the institution and it grew rapidly.

Mrs. Bethune studied the needs of her students and taught them those subjects which would enrich their lives. Besides the three R's, they learned farming, cooking, sewing, health, and handicrafts. She was a mother to all those who attended her school, and even after they were graduated, she kept in touch with them, assisting them in solving many problems in their communities.

To help all the Negroes in Volusia County where Daytona Beach is located, Mrs. Bethune held community conferences, and baby shows. Prizes were awarded for the finest needlework, vegetables, and jellies; for the best-kept cabin and yard, and the healthiest baby.

When she learned that Negroes were not wanted and

were mistreated in the white hospital in Daytona Beach, she, with the help of friends, founded a hospital for her people.

As she traveled throughout the country begging money for her school and pleading with the white people to give the Negro more opportunities, she became known as a great humanitarian.

Mrs. Bethune knew so much about the needs of her people that our presidents sought her advice. She was often called the advisor of presidents.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed her to a high position so that she could help the Negro youth of America. At a time when there was little work to do, she helped worthy young people to get part-time employment, so that they could continue their education in schools, colleges, and universities. She also assisted many idle young people to obtain special training so that they could hold honorable positions.

To help the masses of Negro women throughout the country to improve their opportunities, she, with Mrs. Mary Church Terrell and others, organized the National Council of Negro Women. This organization reaches and influences nearly a million women from every state in the Union.

During the Second World War she wrote to hundreds of service men and women giving them advice and encouragement. To them she was Mother Bethune, and by the end of the war, she was the pin-up girl of thousands.

When the war was over, she was one of those appointed to help write the charter for the United Nations.

Many honors came to this great lady. In 1924 a group of her friends presented her with a trip to Europe. In Rome she was received by the Pope and was given his special blessing. In London she was entertained by the Lord Mayor and his wife, and in Edinburgh, Scotland, she was the guest of the Lord Provost and Lady McLeod.

She received the Thomas Jefferson Award from the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the Drexel Award from Xavier University, and the Spingarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Mrs. Bethune was the first woman to receive the Government of Haiti's highest award, the Gold Medal of Honor and Merit, and she received the African Star of the Republic of Liberia in West Africa.

Fourteen colleges and universities conferred upon her their highest degrees.

She lived to see her small school grow from an investment of \$1.50 to a plant worth more than a million dollars; from one shabby four-room cottage to eighteen modern buildings on a campus of thirty-two acres; from a student body of five little girls to one of more than seven hundred young men and women learning to lead useful, happy lives.

In October, 1954, at the age of 79, Mrs. Bethune re-

ceived the Dorie Miller Memorial Award and was named the Mother of the Century.

This honor like many others came to her because of "her unselfish efforts to raise the level of her people, and to unite women of her race in service to all mankind."

When she passed away on May 18, 1955, the world mourned her loss.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

If you wish to hear Mrs. Bethune's voice as she urges Negro youth to take advantage of their opportunities, listen to her on

Folkways Record

F P 752 The Glory of Negro History

In *Mary McLeod Bethune* by Catherine Owens Peare you will find many interesting photographs of events in Mrs. Bethune's life.

If you should like to read other stories about Mrs. Bethune, you will find them in the following books:  
*Word Pictures of the Great* by Derricotte, Turner, and Roy.  
*Our Negro Brother* by Edith H. Mayer.



Mary Church Terrell



## CHAPTER XXX

### MARY CHURCH TERRELL

#### A Famous Humanitarian

A humanitarian is a person who loves his fellow man. He loves him so much that he will spend his life in helping him all he can. He is especially kind to those who are less fortunate than he.

One of the best loved humanitarians was a Negro woman, Mary Church Terrell. She was never poor as were many famous Negroes. As long as she could remember, she enjoyed not only the necessities but many of the luxuries of life; and from her childhood she was taught to be kind and to share with others.

Mary's parents were cultured people. They were quiet and refined in manner. They spoke in soft, gentle, low voices; and they used excellent English in all their conversation. They enjoyed the best music, art, and literature, and they taught their children to appreciate them.

This may seem unusual because both her parents had been slaves. But her mother's master was kind to her and taught her to read and write and also to speak French. His daughter bought the wedding trousseau when she went on a visit to

New York City; and the master and mistress gave her a nice wedding.

Mary Church Terrell was born in a suburb of Memphis, Tennessee, where her mother and father were in business. Her mother was a hairdresser and owned a hair store.

Mary's first playmates were German children who lived in her neighborhood. From them she learned to speak many words in the German language. Sometimes her mother did not understand her because she called things by their German names.

The first school Mary attended was in a church near a bayou. She enjoyed school, but although she liked her teacher, she often annoyed her in one way. Mary liked to talk.

One day her father bought her a beautiful doll. He was so eager for his little daughter to see it, he could not wait until she returned from school. When he took it to the schoolhouse, he found Mary tied to her teacher's apron strings. He was astonished, but the teacher explained quickly.

"Mary is a lovely little girl, Mr. Church, and means well; but it is impossible for her to keep still. A while ago I noticed that her seat was empty. When I looked down the aisle, I discovered her crawling on the floor to whisper to a little neighbor. Perhaps it would have been better if you had not brought her the doll."

But Mary's father gave her the doll, and the teacher let her play with it at recess time.

When Mary was six years old, her mother took her to Yellow Springs, Ohio, to live with a family named Hunster. Here she could go to a Model School connected with Antioch College. Her mother thought this school was better than the school in Memphis, Tennessee, and she and Mr. Church wanted their daughter to have the best education they could afford.

Mary was happy indeed staying with the Hunsters. They lived in a large house and kept a candy store in the front room. Mary patronized this store very well, for her father sent her five dollars every month for sweetmeats.

While Mary was attending this Model School, her mother engaged a young woman student to give her lessons in German, for she believed that children should learn to speak at least two foreign languages.

Mary remained in Yellow Springs during her summer vacations. She spent much of her time reading good books, learning poems by heart, and reciting them. She drew her books from the library of the Sunday School of the Christian Church.

She could hardly wait for the St. Nicholas magazine to come each month. She liked to try to solve the puzzles in the back. One time when she opened the magazine, she was thrilled to see her name in print for the first time. She had solved correctly one of the puzzles!

Mary remained in Yellow Springs until she was 10 years old. Then her parents sent her to Oberlin, Ohio, where she

finished the elementary school, high school, and Oberlin College.

In her freshman year at Oberlin College, she was elected class poet. For a while she was one of the editors of the *Oberlin Review*, the college paper; and she was further honored by being accepted as a member of the Aeolian Literary Society.

All during her college course, she dreamed of the day when she could serve her people. She wanted to help all of them to enjoy equal rights and to be given opportunities to live full and happy lives. She thought that through teaching she could realize some of her ambitions.

When she applied for a position at Wilberforce University, she received the appointment and taught there for two years. Then she was invited to teach in the colored high school in Washington, D. C.

After teaching there one year, her father took her abroad. She traveled and studied in England, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Italy.

On returning to Washington, she taught again in the high school.

When she married Judge Robert Terrell, she had to give up teaching; but soon afterward she received a great honor which gave her many more opportunities to serve her people.

She became the first colored woman to serve on the Board of Education in Washington, D. C.

She wanted the colored children of Washington to have

the best education possible. In order to serve them well, she visited the schools often, to become personally acquainted with the teachers, to understand their many problems, their methods of teaching, and their attitudes toward their pupils.

She encouraged the School Board to employ only the best teachers, those who were graduated from the best colleges and universities, those who had won high honors during their college careers, those who had traveled widely at home or abroad, and most important of all, those who were of good character and loved children.

There is so much good that can be said of Mary Church Terrell.

She wanted to help all the colored women of America to enjoy fuller and happier lives, so with several other women, she helped to organize the National Association of Colored Women and became their first president.

She helped to organize the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and was one of its charter members.

She used her gift of writing to help her people. Some of the leading magazines in England and America published her articles which urged white people to be more kind to the Negro.

She used her talent as a public speaker to plead for justice for the unfortunate.

When she delivered two addresses at the International



Congress of Women in Berlin, Germany, she thrilled her audiences by giving one in German and the other in French.

During her lecture tours and visits to foreign countries, she was often the guest of royalty.

She worked with prominent women to obtain Woman Suffrage which gave to all American women the right to vote.

She was the first colored woman to become a member of the American Association of University Women.

She was the personal friend of many famous Negroes including Booker T. Washington, Frederick Douglass, and Paul Laurence Dunbar; and she worked with them for the good of her people.

Oberlin College named her as "one of its one hundred most famous women," and conferred upon her the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

When she passed away at the age of 90, Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the wife of our president, said of her: "I am proud to honor the memory and the great work of Mrs. Mary Church Terrell. She was rarely endowed. For more than 60 years her great gifts were dedicated to the betterment of humanity, and she left a truly inspiring record."

#### SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

1. What are the traits of a cultured person?
2. How can we develop those traits?

## CHAPTER XXXI

### CHARLES CLINTON SPAULDING

#### President of the World's Largest Negro Business

The Emancipation Proclamation did not solve all the Negro's problems. In fact, their problems multiplied after they gained their freedom. Many were destitute. Some had no homes, no money, or any other possessions.

If they became ill, kind neighbors, relatives, and friends would help them. When they passed away, the church would often take up a collection to give them a respectable burial.

Soon they began to band themselves together to help one another in sickness and distress. They organized lodges, burial societies, and their own insurance companies. One of these organizations, the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, grew to be the world's largest Negro business.

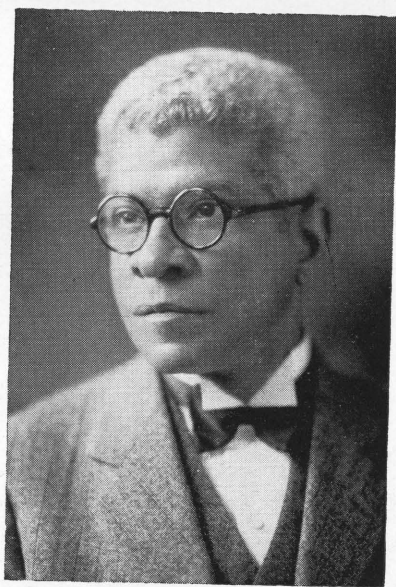
The first manager of this enterprise was Charles Clinton Spaulding. He later became its president and retained that office until his death in 1952.

Spaulding was born in a three-room log house on a small cotton farm in the eastern part of North Carolina 10 years

after Emancipation. He was the third of a family of 14 children, and as soon as he was old enough to do a day's work in the fields, he was sent out with the rest of the boys to take his turn at the plow.

His father, Benjamin Spaulding, taught him the most important lessons he ever learned about getting ahead in this country. He believed in America and taught his children they could succeed by years of sweat, thrift, and courage.

He kept everybody busy. On rainy days he put the boys



Charles Clinton Spaulding

to work helping him build carts and mend the farm equipment. Then he made them help their mother scour the house. Their mother was queen of the home and she kept it spotlessly clean. Each week she scoured everything—floors, walls, furniture—with sand and soap. She scrubbed not only the top of the table but the legs as well.

Spaulding's father refused to hate any man. He taught his children that hate did not make sense. He told them that success came to those who knew how to get along with other people. All his life he practiced neighborly co-operation with everybody, and he lived to own a prosperous farm and to be a leader in his community.

When Charles was 20, he left the farm and went to Durham, North Carolina, to live with an uncle so that he could complete at least an 8th grade education. To earn his way, he washed dishes for \$10 a month at a hotel.

At school it was embarrassing for him to be with children so much younger than he, but he threw pride to the winds and with determination he finished the Whitted School when he was 23.

Soon after he was graduated, two men, Dr. A. M. Moore, his uncle, and John Merrick, a barber, urged him to become the general manager of an insurance company they were trying to organize. Their purpose in developing this company was to serve their people. At that time the big insurance companies were not interested in insuring Negroes.

Mr. Merrick was president, Dr. Moore, vice-president,

and Spaulding was to serve as office boy, agent, janitor and manager. He sold all the policies, collected all the premiums, and kept the records.

His work was not easy. Some colored people believed the company might not survive, so they hesitated to put their savings into it. Others were suspicious of him, because they had never before seen a colored insurance salesman.

When there was little business in Durham, Spaulding decided to go to other cities in North Carolina. While he was in Charlotte, he suddenly realized he did not have enough money to get home. The nickels and dimes he had collected paid his fare only to Southern Pines. Here he collected enough money to get to Sanford. After working there for a day, he went to the station only to find he still needed 25 cents to reach Durham. A kindly traveling drummer gave him the quarter and he reached home at last.

He was discouraged. How could his insurance company grow if he could not sell the policies? He decided to give up.

When he told Dr. Moore and Mr. Merrick he wished to resign, they asked him if he were a "quitter"; so he agreed to try again.

But his greatest disappointment came soon afterward. He had sold his first policy to a laboring man who paid 65 cents as the first premium. Only six weeks afterward, he died of high blood pressure. His widow rushed up to Spaulding on the street and asked for the \$40 death benefits. He told her he would pay her immediately, although he knew he had



only 29 cents of the money he had collected in six weeks. The rest had been paid for operating expenses.

He hurried to his "office" in the rear of Merrick's barber shop to tell his coworkers of his panic. They agreed that the woman should be paid at once, and they dug down into their pockets to get the money. The widow signed a receipt which they proudly showed future policy holders.

Word spread rapidly that this insurance company paid promptly all claims, and they were well on the road to success.

From time to time, they had other problems, but kind white friends helped them with good advice. Spaulding often told his friends how Washington Duke, founder of the American Tobacco Company, and Mr. Jones, the Durham representative of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, helped them in their earliest, darkest days. Other friends were Judge R. W. Winston and V. S. Bryant Sr., who gave them legal advice.

The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company has helped the Negro in many different ways. When it was organized, there were no fire insurance companies willing to insure property owned by Negroes, so they began to sell fire insurance.

Negroes could not obtain loans for home building, so they started the Mutual Building and Loan Association.

To encourage thrift among colored people, they founded the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank.

Charles C. Spaulding, John Merrick, and Dr. Moore used much of their money for the betterment of the colored people in Durham.

Negroes were not permitted to use the public library, so they helped to establish a library for colored people.

Since Negro doctors and nurses were not allowed to serve on the staff of the City Hospital, they encouraged the wealthy Duke family to help them build Lincoln Hospital for Negroes. Here colored nurses could be trained and doctors might interne.

For almost 30 years Charles Clinton Spaulding was president of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Mutual Building and Loan Association, and the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank.

In 1948 the life insurance company had \$131,000,000 worth of insurance in force, and Mechanics and Farmers' Bank had \$5,000,000 in resources.

Often Mr. Spaulding was asked the secret in starting a successful business.

"The three essentials," he always said, "are character, efficiency, and capital. Character and efficiency are the most important. If you have them, you can obtain the capital."

Many times he was asked to give commencement addresses, and he always told the graduates the importance of co-operation. He said that life had to be lived out, not with money or machines, but with people. He urged them to

learn to get along not only with their own people but with all people.

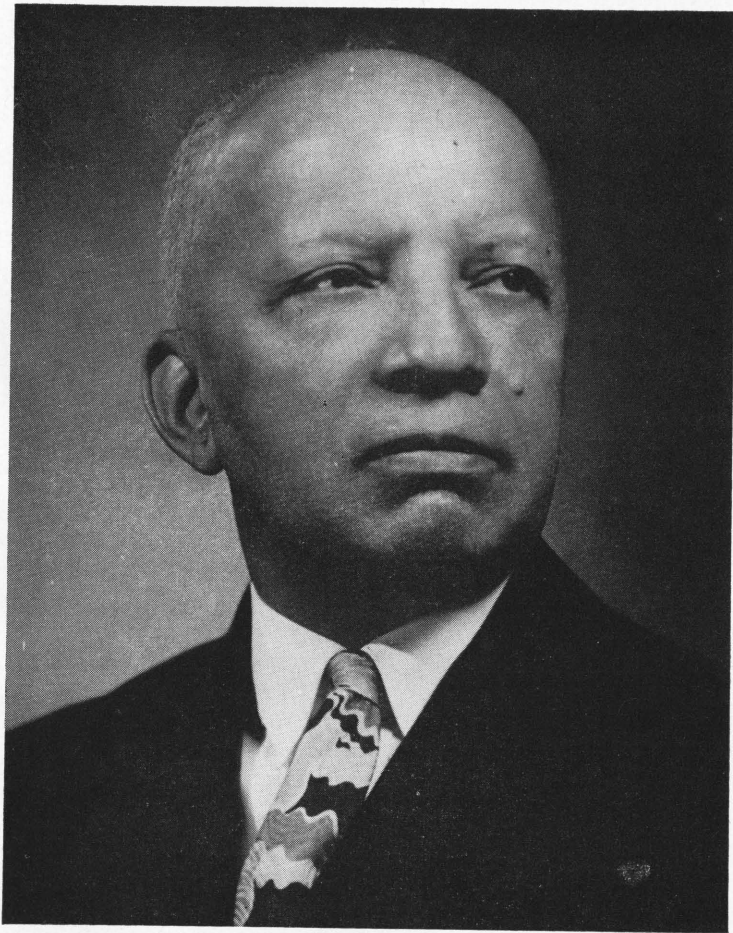
He emphasized that America was the greatest land of opportunity for all its citizens, and as proof he pointed to himself and hundreds of other successful Negroes.

In answer to a misinformed person who remarked that America's opportunities were limited to the privileged few, Spaulding made this reply:

"I have traveled through 15 European countries and am convinced that there is no place on earth where people can make such progress as right here in America, if they have ability, character, and imagination. I shall always feel grateful that my ancestors were transplanted to North America. It is the best place in the world that I have found to live."

#### SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

1. How did Charles Clinton Spaulding help his people?
2. Why was he successful?



Carter G. Woodson

## CHAPTER XXXII

### DR. CARTER G. WOODSON

#### An Eminent Historian

You have read the stories of many eminent Negroes. Some of them became famous because they did so much to help their own people, especially those who were less fortunate than they.

Let me tell you the story of another Negro who was so proud of the achievement of his people that he founded an important organization for the purpose of studying Negro life and history. He wrote histories telling the truth about his people; and he started the observance of Negro History Week which is now celebrated throughout America.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson was the son of former slaves, James and Anne Eliza Woodson. He was born December 19, 1875, at New Canton, in Buckingham County, Virginia. As his parents were poor, and had a large family to care for, they could not provide him with many of the comforts of life.

He was unable to attend the district school during much of its five-month term because his parents needed him to work on the farm. Whenever he could not go to school during the day, he taught himself at night. By the time he was



seventeen, he had mastered all the subjects offered at the district school.

Hoping to further his education, he persuaded his brother, Robert Henry, to go with him to Huntington, West Virginia. Here for several years he was forced to work as a miner in the Fayette County coal fields.

When he did enter Douglass High School in Huntington, he completed the course in less than two years. He then entered Berea College, in Kentucky, and was graduated after only two years of study.

All the rest of Dr. Woodson's life was spent in studying, teaching, traveling, writing, and publishing. He became known as a scholar, an educator, a world traveler, historian, author, and publisher.

He was called a scholar because he studied at some of the leading colleges and universities in America and abroad; and he received from these schools the highest honors which they could award their students.

At Berea College he earned the degree of Bachelor of Literature; and at the University of Chicago he was awarded the Bachelor of Arts, and Master of Arts degrees. Harvard University, the oldest and most famous school in America, conferred upon him their highest degree, Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. Woodson used his learning to help his people. He was called an educator because he spent many years teaching in schools and colleges.

He served as principal of two high schools: Douglass High at Huntington, West Virginia, and Armstrong High School in Washington, D. C.

For four years he was Supervisor of Schools in the Philippine Islands, where he learned to speak Spanish fluently.

When he returned to America, he taught French and Spanish in the high schools of Washington, D. C.

Dr. Woodson is best known as a great historian. History was the subject he enjoyed most of all.

When he read many histories of our country, he learned that little was said about the Negro. All the histories told that Negroes had been slaves, but they did not tell how much they had done for their country and its people after they were given their freedom.

None of them told that it was the Negro who "taught the modern world trial by jury, music by stringed instruments, the domestication of the sheep, goat, and cow, and the use of iron by which science and invention have remade the universe."

Dr. Woodson thought every one should know how Negroes have helped to make our world a better place in which to live. He searched for these facts in some of the most famous libraries of America. Then for one year he traveled and studied in Europe, Asia, and Africa searching for truths about his people. He studied for one semester at the University of Paris, called the Sorbonne.

When he returned to America he organized the Associa-

tion for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915, and started publishing his own magazine, *The Journal of Negro History*, to carry on the work of the Association. He also wrote an important book, *The Negro in Our History*. This book is now used in colleges throughout our country and in many foreign lands. More than 50,000 copies have already been sold.

Dr. Woodson wrote many other books about Africa and Negroes in America, and he encouraged other writers to do the same.

When he learned that many publishers did not care to publish books about Negroes, he started a publishing house of his own, which he called the Associated Publishers. Some of the most interesting books about Negroes come from this publishing house.

Although Dr. Woodson had done much for his people, he was not content. He wanted the true story of the Negro to reach more people. He thought and thought about it.

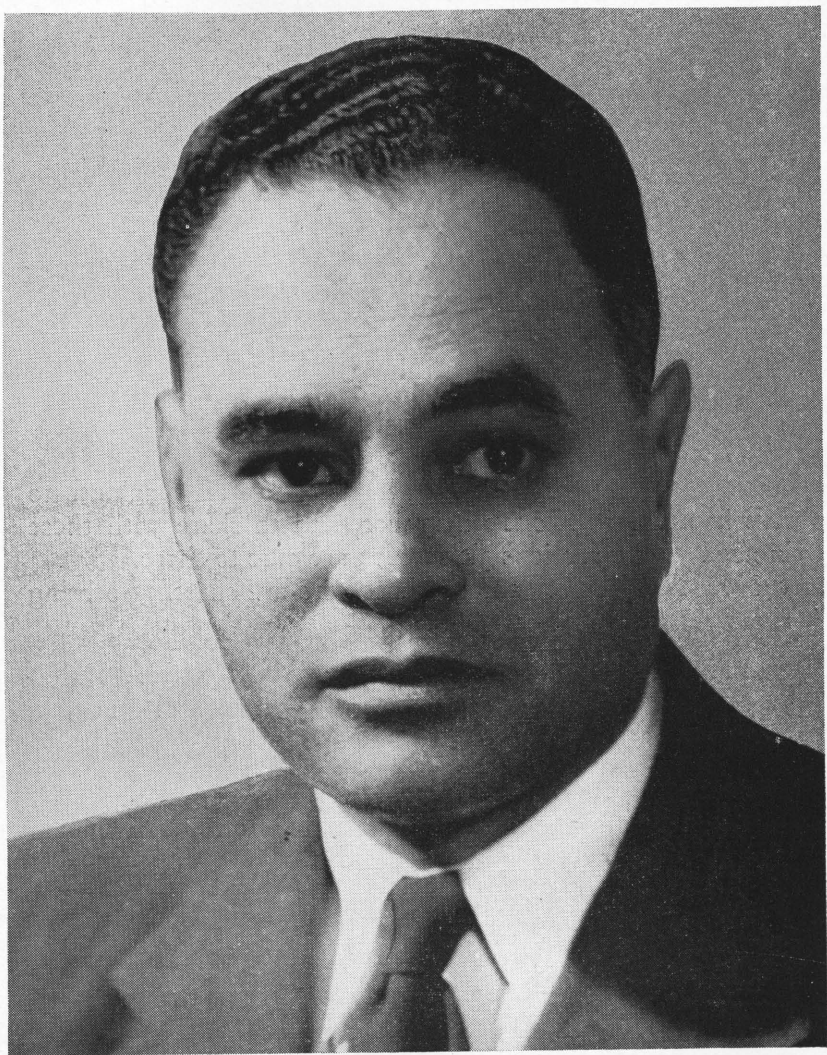
One day he had an idea. "Americans observe Book Week, Education Week, Boys Club Week, and many other weeks," he said to himself. "Why not encourage them to celebrate Negro History Week?"

He published his plan in many newspapers and magazines and the idea spread rapidly. So many teachers wrote to him to obtain information about the Negro that he started publishing a magazine especially for elementary schools. He called it the *Negro History Bulletin*.

Throughout our country, Negro History Week is now observed by schools, libraries, churches, and other organizations. It is celebrated the second week in February in order to include the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln, February 12, and Frederick Douglass, February 14.

Many honors came to Dr. Woodson during his lifetime. The one he appreciated most was the Spingarn Medal in 1926. This gold medal is given each year by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, "for the highest or noblest achievement by an American Negro during the preceding year or years."

In 1954 in Washington, D. C., Carter G. Woodson Junior High School was named in his honor. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in Washington, D. C. continues as a monument to his genius and power of organization.



Ralph Johnson Bunche



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### RALPH BUNCHE

The greatest leaders in the world today are thinking about the welfare of all the unfortunate people who live on this earth. They are deeply concerned not only about their own race, or creed, or color, or country; but also for all the peoples of the world.

There is a longing to bring happiness to all mankind, to live in peace with one's neighbor, and to share with those in need all the precious gifts which are ours to share.

Negro leaders are among those who are striving to bring about this peace on earth.

The most outstanding Negro statesman is Dr. Ralph Bunche, whose success in bringing peace between the people of Israel and the Arabs earned for him the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ralph Johnson Bunche was born in Detroit, Michigan, August 7, 1904. He was the son of a barber, and his birth-place was an apartment over his father's shop. In the Bunche household lived Ralph's father, mother, sister, two aunts, and his grandmother.

When Ralph was very young, both his mother and father became ill. The doctors thought their health would improve if they moved to a dry climate out West, but shortly after

the family traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico, both parents passed away.

From that time Grandmother Johnson reared him and his sister.

In 1916 they moved to Los Angeles, where Ralph was graduated with honors from the elementary school.

At Jefferson High School, he was an excellent student and athlete. At graduation he received medals for debating and civics.

When he finished high school, he enrolled at the University of California at Los Angeles. A four-year scholarship paid his tuition, but he had to work to buy his textbooks and earn his spending money.

He was employed as a janitor of the gymnasium and had to get up at five o'clock in the morning to finish his work before going to class.

While attending the University he had an unfortunate accident at a picnic. A tiny piece of straw worked its way into his ear, and when a mastoid condition developed, he had to have two operations which left him deaf in one ear.

In 1927, however, he was graduated with the highest honors. He was valedictorian of his class. He was elected to membership in the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity. He received five medals for excellence in various subjects, and a scholarship to Harvard University.

The colored people of Los Angeles were so proud of him they gave him one thousand dollars to help defray his ex-

penses. But he was very sad when he left, because his beloved grandmother had passed away a few days before his departure.

After studying a year at Harvard, he received the Master of Arts degree. Then he accepted a position as professor of political science at Howard University in Washington, D. C.

He fell in love with a beautiful girl in one of his classes and married her in 1930.

Later he returned to Harvard University and earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree in political science.

Throughout Dr. Bunche's college career, he studied the peoples of the world; their history, their culture, their habits, their governments. He was interested in the welfare of all the world's people, and wanted to see them live peaceably together.

He traveled in Europe, Asia, and Africa, to learn for himself, the truth about these peoples, and the ways our government might serve them.

He became an expert in human relations, and his services were sought by our presidents. They appointed him to high positions in the government, and he became the first Negro to be in full charge of an office in the State Department.

When war broke out between the people of Israel and the Arabs, it was Dr. Ralph Bunche who settled the dispute. For this achievement he was awarded in 1950 the Nobel Peace Prize.

He has held in the United Nations two important offices, and in 1955 he was one of the highest ranking American officials in that organization.

Dr. Bunche has faith in the goodness of mankind. He believes we can achieve the kind of world we long for, and he is looking forward to the time when "all men shall walk together as equals and with dignity."

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### RIDDLES

Do you like to guess riddles? Here are some very interesting ones which you will enjoy guessing because they are very easy. The answer to each one is the name of some noted Negro about whom you have read.

Write the answers to as many as you can.

Your teacher will help you with any difficult words.

1. I am thinking about a famous humanitarian. She was born in a cultured family and enjoyed many of the luxuries of life. She traveled and studied in many foreign countries. She gave lectures and wrote many articles for newspapers and magazines urging white people to be more kind to the Negro. She was the first colored woman to become a member of the School Board in Washington, D. C. She helped to organize the National Association of Colored Women and was their first president.

Who was she?

2. I am thinking about a famous soldier. He went to school at West Point Military Academy. He became an officer in the United States Army. He and his brave men saved Colonel Roosevelt and his Rough Riders from being killed by the Spaniards.

Who was he?

3. I am thinking of a little slave boy who struggled hard to get an education. He traveled five hundred miles to a



great school named Hampton Institute. Most of this distance he traveled on foot.

When he reached Hampton he was told to sweep a room. He swept it three times and dusted it four times. He was permitted to enter the school because he did this work so well.

When he finished Hampton Institute he founded Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

Who was he?

4. I am thinking of a little slave girl. She was born in Africa. When she was seven years old, she was stolen from her home and brought to our country. She was sold as a slave to a man in Boston. He bought her as a present for his invalid wife.

Her mistress was very kind to her, and she let her daughter teach her to read and write.

This little girl became a famous woman poet.

Who was she?

5. I am thinking of a famous Negro orator. He was born a slave. His mother and father died when he was six years old. Then he had no one to care for him.

He learned to read and write from posters on cellars and barn doors.

One day he ran away from his master and went up North where he was free. We remember him for his great speeches against slavery.

Who was he?

6. I am thinking of a famous poet. His father and mother were slaves. They named him after a character in the Bible. He wrote his first poem when he was only six

years old. When his father died he made a living for his mother and himself by running an elevator.

Who was he?

7. I am thinking about a great musician. He stood out in the snow for hours one night to see a great artist play the piano. He became the soloist in the choirs of two large white churches in New York City. He wrote the music for many Negro spirituals. One of his compositions was "Deep River."

Who was he?

8. I am thinking about a famous artist. His father was a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. This artist painted pictures of the stories in the Bible. One of his pictures is in the Luxembourg, a beautiful palace now used for an art gallery in France.

Who was he?

9. I am thinking about a famous Negro inventor. He came to our country from South America. He worked in a cobbler's shop in Massachusetts. He invented a machine that could make a whole shoe by itself.

Who was he?

10. I am thinking about a famous Negro actor whose grandfather was an African prince. He was born in our country but moved to England when he was a young man. He became a dear friend of the great English actor, Edmund Kean, and took part in Shakespeare's plays. He was honored by kings and queens all over Europe.

Who was he?

11. I am thinking about a famous Negro sailor who was born on an island off the coast of Massachusetts. When he grew up, he became very rich trading with the people on the coast of our country. He owned three ships that sailed the

seas. Once he took to Africa on one of his ships thirty-eight free Negroes.

Who was he?

12. I am thinking about a Negro inventor who made a clock that could strike the hour. He studied astronomy a long time and published an almanac. He helped to plan the beautiful city of Washington, D. C.

Who was he?

13. I am thinking about a famous Negro historian. He was called a scholar, an educator, a world traveler, author and publisher. He founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. He wrote histories of the Negro and started the observance of Negro History Week.

Who was he?

14. I am thinking of the president of the world's largest Negro business. He helped to organize in Durham, North Carolina, the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Mutual Building and Loan Association, and the Mechanics and Farmers Bank. His father taught him to hate no one, and to practice neighborly cooperation with everybody.

What was his name?

15. I am thinking of a famous chemurgist who was born a slave. When he was a baby, he was stolen by night-riders. His master traded a race horse for his return. He taught at Tuskegee Institute. He made 118 products from the sweet potato and more than 300 from the peanut.

Who was he?

16. I am thinking of a famous woman. She went to school at Scotia Seminary and Moody Bible Institute. With only \$1.50 she started a school at Daytona Beach, Florida. She

was called the advisor of presidents. For her many good deeds, she was named the Mother of the Century.

Who was she?

17. I am thinking of a famous statesman. He was born in Detroit, Michigan. When his mother and father passed away he was reared by his grandmother. While attending high school in Los Angeles, California, he received many honors. In college he became a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He taught political science at Howard University. He settled a dispute between the people of Israel and the Arabs, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He became the highest ranking American in the United Nations.

What is his name?

18. I am thinking about a great scientist. He learned many interesting things about the crawfish, the honey bee, the roach, and the ant. He was educated at the University of Cincinnati and the University of Chicago.

Who was he?

#### SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

As you have read the stories in this book, you may have been led to believe that the history of the American Negro began with slavery. This is not true. Many American Negroes were never slaves, and they played an important part in our country's history long before the first slave was brought to our shores.

It is said that one of the pilots with Columbus, Pedro Alonzo Niño, was a Negro but this has not been established definitely.

Negroes were with Balboa when he discovered the Pacific Ocean and they helped him build a highway across the Isthmus of Panama.

An African named Estavanico discovered what is now our state of Arizona, and a black man planted the first wheat in the new world when he came into Mexico with Cortez.

You will enjoy reading the stories of these men in *The First Book of Negroes* by Langston Hughes and *Our Negro Brother* by Edith H. Mayer.

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